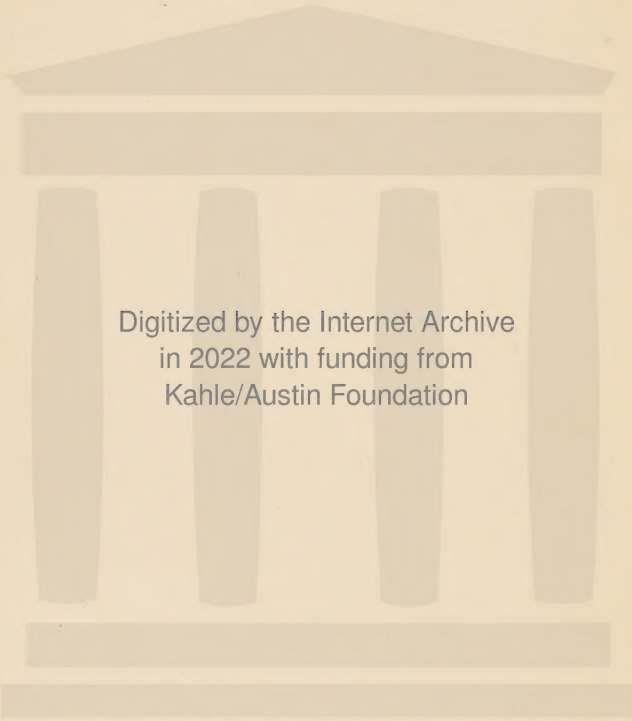






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# SIDE LIGHTS ON AMERICAN HISTORY

REVISED EDITION

BY

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"MODERN TIMES AND THE LIVING PAST"

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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

HISTORY can be presented to us only by means of pictures, reproductions of that which we cannot directly witness.

If you study a city from photographs, the general bird's-eye view is necessary to give you the relative size and location of things; but such a view is not enough. You must have pictures, on a larger scale, of a busy street, a mammoth office building, a public park, the interior of a workshop, and the like. The ordinary school history furnishes the bird's-eye view of our country's origin and growth; the present volume aims to give a more detailed account — a picture on a larger scale — of some of the chief events in our history. It is intended not to replace the textbook, but to supplement it.

The textbook gives the succession of events and, in some measure, their relative importance; but, owing to the multitude of subjects to be treated within the limits of a small volume, none can be exhaustively dealt with. It is impossible for any writer, however skilful, to relate historical facts in a form so condensed as that of the average textbook, and at the same time to give them that living interest so necessary in holding the attention of young readers. The textbook is useful and indispensable; it is the index that points to the vast wealth of knowledge that may be found in our historical literature; it furnishes the groundwork on which rests the entire structure of historic knowledge. But unfortunately the textbook too often is little more than a chronicle of events, an array of dates and facts, a skeleton

without flesh, without life, without soul. Such a book is ill adapted to awaken an interest in historical study, and can be used successfully in the schools only in connection with other works as supplementary reading. Used in this way the skeleton of the textbook may be clothed with flesh and have breathed into it the breath of life.

Our learned and more exhaustive historical works are beyond the reach of most busy people, nor are they adapted to use in the schools. Between these two extremes, the condensed textbook and the ponderous volumes of the historian, we find many books of great value — biographies, memoirs, histories of limited periods or of particular localities — but none of these, as far as the author knows, is fitted for the use of schools or was prepared with that end in view.

This work covers a field not hitherto covered. It has been written for the general reader, as well as for use in schools of the grammar-school grade and of the grades immediately above it. It is hoped that the book may also be found a pleasant review to the busy teacher, who has many things to teach and who finds it impossible to become a specialist in everything.

The period covered is the first seventy years of our national history; but no attempt to give a connected history of that period has been made. At the same time much care has been taken to show the bearing of one great event upon another, their causes and results, and the part each bore in making our civilization what it is.

The subjects treated in the various chapters have been selected with the utmost care. The aim has been to choose, not the dramatic and exciting, but the strategic points, the pivots on which the ponderous machinery of our history has turned. This is true of most of the chapters. A few, however, such as "Washington's Inauguration," "Conspir-



acy of Aaron Burr," "The Campaign of 1840," and the "Underground Railroad," have been chosen with a view of picturing the state of society at the time treated.

In order that every important aspect of our national growth be presented to the reader, the subjects chosen are as unlike in character as practicable, and the events have been related with greater detail than is possible in the ordinary school history. This has been done at the sacrifice of leaving out many subjects of almost equal importance with those selected. Minor incidents and details in history, often insignificant in themselves, are, like illustrations in a sermon or lecture, useful for the light they throw on more important matters.

The authorities consulted in preparing this work are far more numerous than indicated in the foot-note references. Those given are chiefly the works most likely to be accessible to the reader who may be stimulated to further research.

H. W. E.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.,  
May, 1899.

## PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

THE lasting success, unbroken for many years, of *Side Lights on American History* has been the inducement leading the author and publishers to issue this new and revised edition.

Every chapter has been worked over with much care and various new chapters have been added. Among the latter are "The Indian"; "The French and Indian War" (from the author's *History of the United States*); "Incidents of the Revolution"; "Odds and Ends"; "A Batch of Biographies"; "Anecdotes of the Civil War"; "Panama and the Caribbean"; "America and the Great War"; "War and the League of Nations"; and "Science and Invention in the Twentieth Century." Most of these are in lighter vein than are the chapters of the first edition.

It is hoped that this new edition, like the first one, will be found worthy of a place in many home libraries as well as in the schools.

H. W. E.

NEW YORK,  
November, 1927.

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# Side Lights on American History

## CHAPTER I

### THE INDIAN

OF all the discoveries made by the Europeans when they first came to this Western World the most wonderful was the new race of men. Columbus called them Indians because he did not know where he was. He thought he was in the East Indies, near the coast of Asia. That there was another ocean between him and Asia, far greater than the one he had crossed, did not occur to him.

Who the Indians were, where their ancestors had come from, or how long they had occupied the land, no one knew and no one knows to this day. They had no books, no writing; they had not recorded their own history and they knew nothing of their origin. They were living in prehistoric times. As the country was gradually explored, it was found that the Indians occupied the whole land, from the Arctic regions to the southern point of South America. No doubt they had been here for thousands of years. But they were scattered thinly over the land and it is possible that the Indian population in the whole Western Hemisphere never at any one time greatly exceeded one million.

The Indians had risen above the state of savagery. They were barbarians. For the most part they lived in tribes. The tribe was divided into clans and each clan had two leaders — a sachem, who was a sort of civil officer, and a chief, who led in war. The village, the center of the tribe

or clan, was a collection of huts, movable wigwams, or tepees. In these tepees there was little or no furniture. The men, women, and children slept on the ground, on a bed of leaves or skins of animals, outside or within the wigwam, wearing the same clothing they wore during the day.

Game and fish furnished most of the Indians with food. To these were often added berries and small fruits that grew wild. Some tribes cultivated patches of corn, beans, and pumpkins. Sometimes in the winter the tribes were reduced to want and they were forced to eat roots and weed seed to keep from starvation.

The chief supply of food and clothing came from the chase, and the Indian showed wonderful skill in capturing wild animals. He could run with the fleetness of an antelope, could follow a trail like a bloodhound, or he could deceive almost any wild creature by imitating it — he could bark like a wolf, hoot like an owl, gobble like a turkey, or imitate the whistle of a bird. Like all primitive peoples the Indian had invented the bow and arrow and, having practiced from childhood, he became an expert in using it. Even as a boy he could send the flint-pointed arrow into the tree-tops and bring down birds or squirrels.

Without books or literature, with no schools or churches or factories, the Indian had little to do except fit himself to be a skillful hunter and warrior. When not on the war-path nor engaged in the chase he would lie around idly for days or weeks. The squaws, as the women were called, did most of the work. They cultivated the corn patches, if they had any, gathered the wild rice and whortleberries, made the beaded moccasins, dressed the skins, and prepared the meals. A squaw working in the fields or gathering berries would have her baby, called a papoose, tightly bound to a block of wood and would hang him on the limb of a

tree or strap him on her back so that she could flee instantly in case of sudden danger.

The Indian is not cruel by nature. Perhaps no race of men is cruel; but all races are selfish and from this fact and from misunderstandings come disputes and wars. Of course we have often heard and read of dreadful Indian massacres; but it must be remembered that the Indian had no way to imprison or enslave his captive. The only way to make sure that his enemy would not trouble him again was to kill him. No doubt our own race, in the same stage of civilization, practiced the same thing. The Indians did not always kill their captives. Sometimes they adopted them, especially the women and children, into their own tribes. If the Indian tortured his captured enemy, it was because his war frenzy had worked him into an abnormal condition.

The Indian was very kindhearted and hospitable to his friends. Sometimes an Indian would have a party of his friends and give away everything he had — his last pony, his bows and arrows, his best clothing — would actually impoverish himself to prove his friendship. But to an enemy he was fierce and merciless.

The Indian tribes were usually in a state of war with one another. They might not meet in battle for months or years; but when they met, they fought. Before the coming of the white men the Indians had no firearms. Their weapons were the bow and arrow, stone axe, tomahawk, and knife, rudely made of stone or bone. The Indian was very courageous and fierce in war, but he preferred to surprise his enemy, to spring upon him from a ravine or a dark shadow, rather than to attack him in the open.

The Indian wars were usually fought for the possession of the land, and the tribes fought to exterminate one another.

A vastly greater territory is required to support a people by hunting and fishing than is required to support an equal number who cultivate the soil and raise domestic animals. This accounts for the fact that the Indians were never thickly settled over the country.

It is uncertain whether the Indians, if left alone indefinitely, would have advanced far in civilization. They seemed content, and most of those surviving in our time seem content, with the simple, wild life of the wilderness. They know nothing and care nothing about the great world beyond their own horizon. They are not interested in modern progress; they care nothing for the arts and sciences, nor for the hum of industry of the great city. They quickly learned from the white man the use of firearms, and absorbed some of his vices; but otherwise the Indians do not imitate the whites. They build no schools nor churches nor factories. They establish no printing presses, and if they learn to read it is through the efforts of the white man. On the whole, the Indian race seems to lack the spirit of progress, the sleepless energy that characterizes the white race.

#### DANIEL BOONE

Perhaps in no way can we better envisage Indian life in colonial days and reproduce the spirit of those times than by the story of a few of our pioneers. We begin with Daniel Boone, the most famous Indian fighter and woodsman in the history of the country.

When the first colonies were planted in America, the people had to live in the woods. Strange it must have seemed to them, for no doubt many of them scarcely knew before they came what a large forest looked like. But they acquired the habit and came to love the life of the woods above all things. They became attached to the giant trees



as one becomes attached to a dog or a horse. And when the land was cleared about their neighborhood, many of them moved on far into the deep and solemn wood that they might still be denizens of the forest. Of this class was the Boone family.

Daniel Boone was born near the Delaware River in Pennsylvania, the same year in which Thomas Jefferson was born and three years after the birth of George Washington. While Daniel was still a child the family moved farther into the wilderness and settled at a point near Reading. Indians and wild beasts still roamed the hills of eastern Pennsylvania; but even here the Boones were not content to remain. When Daniel was about seventeen, the family, consisting of the parents and eleven children, made the long journey to North Carolina. Here they settled on the banks of the Yadkin River, a beautiful mountain stream flowing through a fertile but wild country where the white settlers were few and far apart.

Daniel more than any of the others of the family was devoted to the life of the forest. While still a boy he would take his dog and his gun and tramp for many miles through the deep forest, often remaining for a week away from home. At night he would build a campfire, cook his supper from game that he had shot, and sleep under the great trees. When Boon grew to manhood he married a young woman named Rebecca Bryan. He then cleared a few acres and built a cabin and in it they lived for more than ten years. Boone tended his little farm between hunting excursions. Sometimes he would remain away from home a month or two; going into the territory that afterwards became Tennessee.

One day when Boone was sitting by his fireside a stranger dropped in — a man named John Finley, also a frontiers-

man of the Boone type. He had heard of Boone as a famous hunter and he came to tell him of a wonderful hunting ground far to the Northwest, called Kentucky. There were myriads of wild turkeys, deer, and buffaloes in this hunter's paradise, and Finley had come to ask if Boone would join a party going to Kentucky. Boone readily consented. He had several children and his oldest boy was now large enough to take care of the little farm.

With Boone as captain, a party of six men set out on the first day of May, 1769. The men wore hunting shirts and fringed leggings of dressed deer skin. From a leather belt was suspended a tomahawk for cutting small trees when they built a tent and in the belt was carried a hunting knife, powder horn, and bullet pouch. After tramping for five weeks the men came to the top of a mountain and opened their eyes on a wonderful scene. It was the land of Kentucky — vast stretches of woodland, with hills and valleys and winding streams. Some of the open spaces were covered with great herds of grazing buffalo. Here on the mountain top the men made their camp and remained for several months. Here they met after hunting excursions, usually in couples. Boone's companion was one John Stewart. One day he and Stewart were captured by the Indians. After seven days in captivity they made their escape at midnight. Hurrying to their mountain camp, they found it vacant. John Finley and the three other men were gone and Boone and Stewart never saw nor heard of them again.

Boone and Stewart decided to spend the winter in Kentucky. One day in January they saw in the distance two men approaching. They proved to be Boone's brother and a friend from North Carolina, and they had brought an ample supply of ammunition. There was great rejoicing in

camp that night. But the rejoicing was turned to mourning when a few weeks later Stewart was shot dead by the Indians and the friend from North Carolina got lost in the woods and was never found. The Boone brothers were now left alone in the solemn depths of the great forest. Again the ammunition ran low and Daniel decided to send his brother home for a supply and to remain in that wild region alone!

Daniel Boone had come to love the solitudes of the forest with an undying devotion. To him the lonely wilderness was a world of enchantment; but he felt no more lonely than a bee among flowers. He was a man of the gentlest spirit, but utterly fearless. No Indian could surpass him in woodcraft or follow a trail with a keener insight. He knew the habits of birds and animals. He was a perfect marksman. He could kill a squirrel with his rifle without drawing blood — by shooting into the bark of a tree on which the animal was sitting in such a way that the concussion caused its death.

Boone spent three months alone in the forest making many exploring expeditions. His object was to find a suitable place for a home and to bring his family to Kentucky. His brother returned with two good horses. The two then spent nearly a year riding over a great part of the territory. They finally decided to make their home on the banks of the Kentucky River.

Loading their horses with skins, they journeyed back to North Carolina. Daniel had been absent two years and in that time had not tasted bread or salt.

In September, 1773, the Boones and a number of neighboring families made up a company and started for Kentucky. They had been on the way for some weeks and were near the Cumberland Gap when a dire calamity overtook them.

They had a small herd of cattle. These were driven by seven young men a mile or two behind the company. One day a band of Indians fired on them, killed six of the boys, and drove off the cattle. One of the slain was the eldest son of Daniel Boone, a lad of seventeen years. So great was their discouragement that the pioneers turned aside and spent about two years in western Virginia. Meantime Daniel went on to the Kentucky River and built a fort, afterward called Boonesboro. He then returned to Virginia and brought his family and the other settlers.

Soon there was a flourishing colony at Boonesboro. After it had been settled about a year, in July, 1776, a few days after the passing of the Declaration of Independence, three of the Boonesboro girls had a real frontier experience. They were captured by the Indians. While playing with a canoe in the edge of the river they looked up and there stood a big Indian. They were about to scream, but with upraised tomahawk he warned them to be silent. He rowed them across the river and was joined by several other Indians. Then began a tramp through the forest. They walked all that day, all night, and all the next day. The Indians then, thinking they were safe from being followed, built a fire and encamped for the night. The girls were Jemima Boone, daughter of Daniel, and two sisters named Gallo-way.

Boonesboro was greatly excited when the capture became known. Every man was ready to start on the trail; but Daniel chose out seven men to go with him, the best marksmen and the swiftest runners in the colony. With great difficulty they followed the trail for fifty miles — and here was the Indian camp. Suddenly four rifle shots rang out on the night air and four of the red men fell dead. The others ran for their lives, not taking time to reach for their guns.

The girls were rescued safe and sound and a few days later they were back in Boonesboro.

The American pioneer had little to fear from the wild animals of the forest. He soon learned their habits and easily became their master. The Indian when on the war-path was the real foe. The pioneer dared not leave his door unarmed. He worked his field in silence, always on the alert for a concealed foe. Even his dog was taught not to bark, but to watch, like his master, for a lurking foe. What seemed to be the bark of a fox or the gobble of a wild turkey might be an Indian trying to lure the white man to destruction. Only the experienced woodsman could detect the deception. Many an untrained hunter was lured to his death in this way by the wily red man.

Only a few of the many experiences of Daniel Boone with the Indians can here be related. Early in the year 1778, Boone, while hunting alone in the woods, was captured by a band of Indians. They took him across the Ohio and northward to Detroit. Here the British commander (it was the time of the Revolution) offered them \$500 for Boone; but they refused to sell him and took him back to an Indian village on the banks of the Miami River. Boone now discovered their object. They intended to adopt him into their tribe. They knew him to be the most skillful hunter in the West and they were very proud of their capture. But they were poor psychologists. They believed after a few months away from his people he would forget them and would be content to remain with his new friends. And Boone pretended to be content; but his heart was with his family on the banks of the Kentucky River and he was constantly planning to make his escape. He was adopted into the tribe of the Shawanoes and was given a thorough scouring in the river "to wash the white blood out of him."



One day Boone learned that four hundred warriors were planning to go to Kentucky and attack Boonesboro, though the land had been ceded to the whites. He decided to defer his adventure no longer. He escaped and ran day and night to the banks of the Ohio. A few days later he was at Boonesboro. But his family, thinking him dead, had gone back to North Carolina. Some time later a large body of Indians attacked Boonesboro and besieged it for nine days without success. Boone had saved the little colony from destruction. He then made a journey to North Carolina and two years later brought his family again to Kentucky.

The saddest day in the early history of Kentucky was that of the battle of the Blue Licks, in August, 1782. On the banks of the Licking River several hundred red warriors who had come from the Ohio country lay waiting the approach of the pioneer army, one hundred eighty strong. Though far inferior in numbers, the whites made a desperate attack. But after a loss of one-third of their number, the remainder fled for their lives, many of them swimming the river to safety. Daniel Boone, with two of his sons by his side, was in the midst of the battle. One of the sons, wounded, escaped in the general flight; the other was shot dead by his father's side. Boone threw the dead body across his shoulder and started to flee; but being pursued by a dozen howling warriors, he dropped the body of his boy and saved his own life by plunging into the river.

The battle of the Blue Licks brought mourning to the settlers of Kentucky. But it was a dear victory to the Indians. Soon afterward General George Rogers Clark, who had made his famous expedition through the swamps and prairies of Illinois, crossed the Ohio with a thousand soldiers. He laid waste the whole country of southwestern Ohio, destroyed the villages, and scattered the Indians in all directions.



Never again did the red warriors attempt to win back the hunting grounds of Kentucky which they had ceded to the white men. For unknown ages the dusky dwellers of the woods had occupied this hunter's paradise. Thousands of times they had chased the buffalo and the deer over the hills; they had gathered the wild rice and whortleberries along the streams and among the canebrakes; they had built their wigwams among the giant timbers; and had lived their simple life unmolested by the arts of civilization. But at last it was all over. A stronger race had come to occupy the land and the red men had to wend their way toward the setting sun.

Not one-tenth of the adventures of Daniel Boone have here been related. He spent his life in the forest and became famous, though perhaps he never had a thought of winning fame. When Kentucky became a well-settled country, thousands of people having come from the East, Boone felt no longer at home, so intense was his love of forest life. After making the long journey to Pennsylvania to visit the scenes of his boyhood, he moved to the Far West, crossed the Mississippi, and spent the evening of his days in Missouri. He died in 1820 at the age of eighty-six years.

#### SIMON KENTON AND THE INDIANS

Simon Kenton was a Virginia boy, brought up on a farm with almost no education. One of the playmates of his childhood was a girl of about his own age, the daughter of a neighboring farmer. When they grew older they became engaged to be married. But the girl, while visiting Alexandria, met a man who became Simon's rival for her affections.

One night the two men met at a party. A quarrel arose between them and the Alexandrian drew a sword and threatened to kill his rival.

Kenton, though only seventeen, was a powerful youth, more than six feet tall. He was angered beyond control when the man drew his sword. He leaped forward, wrested the sword from his enemy's hand, threw it away, caught the man round the body, whirled him in the air, and dashed him to the ground, head downward.

The man lay unconscious and apparently lifeless. Everyone thought that his neck was broken. It was midnight. Simon thought of a hangman's noose or a prison cell; he fled to the forest, and for eleven years not a word was heard of Simon Kenton.

He went to the wilds of Kentucky and Ohio, became a companion of Daniel Boone, and within a few years was one of the most daring Indian fighters in the early history of the country.

One day he saw some settlers floating down the Ohio and, discovering that they were from his own home county in Virginia, began asking them questions about this and that family, and at length about the Kentons.

"The Kentons? Yes, we know them. They are excellent people, but they are old and poor now. Their son ran away from home many years ago and they have never been the same since. He thought he had killed a man, but the man got well. The people round there think Kenton was not to blame."

Kenton became excited as he listened to this speech. He exclaimed: "I am Simon Kenton. I thank God that my father and mother are still alive and that I am not a murderer."

Soon after this Simon made a journey to the home of his childhood to comfort and aid his aged parents. He seemed to them as one risen from the dead.

Not long, however, could he remain in so quiet a place. Nothing could satisfy his roving spirit but the wild life, the

unrestrained freedom of the wilderness. We soon find him again on the banks of the Ohio.

A few only of the adventures of Simon Kenton among the Indians can be given in this narrative. It was the time of the Revolution, and as the Indians had nearly all sided with the English the American pioneers felt justified in killing them when they could.

On one occasion Kenton and two other scouts named Clark and Montgomery went to spy on an Indian village near the Little Miami River, as the whites intended to make a raid on the village. They crept up at night and found out just what they had come to discover. They were ready to start back when the temptation to steal some horses became too strong to be resisted. They took seven or eight horses — all the village had — and set out for Kentucky. In the morning the Indians missed the horses and started afoot on the trail. For two days and nights the race kept up, the Indians only a few hours behind. When Kenton and his companions reached the Ohio they found it high and threatening, and the horses refused to enter the water. No amount of urging could avail, and the three men encamped for the night.

Next morning at daybreak they were greeted by a volley of rifle shots from the near-by thicket. The Indians were upon them. Montgomery was shot dead on the spot, Clark escaped, and Kenton was taken prisoner. Great was the joy of the savages in capturing Kenton. They knew him as a dangerous man, and this was not the first time that he had stolen horses from them.

They tied him on the back of a wild, vicious colt and drove it, without a bridle, through the forest before them. Kenton's face was soon a mass of blood from the scratchings of the branches of trees. He was taken to Old Chillicothe, a

famous Indian town. Here he received every demonstration of rage and hatred; for no one in all the Ohio Valley was better known or more hated than Kenton. They tied him to a stake intending to burn him to death. But as a kitten toys with a mouse before killing it, the Indians refrained from applying the torch and spent the night in torturing him. They pelted him with stones, lashed him with whips, and burned him with hot irons. Next morning he was unbound and made to run the gantlet.

The Indians, men, women, and children, arranged themselves in two lines, each armed with a club, a tomahawk, or hatchet, and, as the pioneer ran between the lines, each one would strike at him. When Kenton reached the end of the line he fell unconscious and was carried to a cabin and thrown into a corner.

When the Indians discovered that he was not dead they decided to defer his execution, and, in a spirit of brotherly kindness, to loan him to other towns. They had not had such fun in many a day, and a good thing ought to be passed around.

Kenton was taken to the various villages and actually ran the gantlet seven times and yet escaped with his life. Three or four times he was tied to the stake to be burned, but in each instance something changed the intention of the savages. At length an Englishman requested that Kenton be given over to him that he might be taken to the British commander at Detroit. This the Indians agreed to only on the condition that he be sent back. The Englishman promised, but did not keep his word. Kenton remained in Detroit over winter — the same winter that Washington spent at Valley Forge.

In the summer, his wounds having healed, he planned with two captive Kentuckians to escape. With greatadroitness

they secured three guns and some ammunition and escaped in the night. Thirty days later, after many daring adventures, they appeared at Louisville, Kentucky.

Again Kenton engaged in his occupation of hunting Indians. And a few days later he was again taken captive. On this occasion he gained his freedom in a curious way.

When at Detroit an English officer had presented him with a lens or sunglass with which to light his pipe, and Kenton always carried it with him. Now when he was bound to the stake, and it seemed that he must surely die, a new idea occurred to him. He knew of the great superstition of the Indians and determined to make the most of it. As a last request he begged that he might smoke his pipe a few minutes before death. The request was granted, and when an Indian brought him fire to light his pipe Kenton waved him off, saying: "No, I will call upon the sun."

He then held the glass to the sun and lit the pipe. The Indians were astonished, and when their prisoner made motions to the sun and set fire to the leaves they were beside themselves with amazement. Kenton then called the chief to come instantly and unbind his ankles. The Indian could not disobey such a man. He loosed the thongs. Kenton now hinted that he would call upon the sun to destroy them if they did not flee to the forest. A few minutes later he was alone, a free man.

Simon Kenton lived to fight through the War of 1812, and in his old age Congress granted him a pension. He became a member of the Church and died a devout Christian in 1836, at the age of eighty-one years.

#### REGINA HARTMAN

It was the time of the French and Indian War. The Indians of the Ohio Valley were mostly favorable to the



English, but in Pennsylvania and many other places they were hostile to the English and Germans, and many an innocent farmer and his family fell victims to the cruel tomahawk. In making raids on the white settlements, the Indians were in the habit of killing the adult members of a family and carrying the children away with them and adopting them into their tribes.

John Hartman was a German farmer who had come with his little family from the Fatherland and settled in a fertile valley among the hills near the place where Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, now stands. The family consisted of the parents and four children — two boys and two girls. The boys were George, almost a young man, and Christian, the baby, a chubby boy of five or six years. The two girls were Barbara, about twelve, and Regina, aged ten years. They were pious, Lutheran people, and, though their nearest neighbors were far away, they were happy in their lonely home.

One morning in the autumn of 1754, after Mr. Hartman had read as usual from the large German Bible, brought with them from across the sea, and, after they had all knelt in prayer, they made their plans for the day.

Mrs. Hartman was to ride on horseback some miles across the country to get a bag of flour from the mill, and little Christian was to go with her. Mr. Hartman and George went to the field to work, and the two girls remained at the house to prepare dinner.

At noon Barbara called the workers to dinner by a blast of the old tin horn. As they sat eating, the faithful family dog, Wasser, came running into the house in great fright. Mr. Hartman was alarmed, for he knew that no common foe could frighten Wasser. He rose and went to the door. Then came the sharp crack of a rifle, and he fell dead at his

own threshold. George was bewildered. He sprang to the door, when another shot laid him dead across the body of his father.

The next moment fifteen yelling, hideous Indian warriors crowded into the house. Wasser leaped and caught one of them by the throat and brought him down, but the noble dog was soon killed with a tomahawk. The Indians then ate the dinner that the little girls had prepared, after which they took the terrified girls and led them to a field. Here they found tied to the fence a little girl only three years old. Her name was Susie Smith; her parents had been murdered by these same Indians but a few hours before. Some of the Indians now returned and set fire to the house and barn, and all the fruit of the toil of John Hartman, his own body, and that of his son George were laid in the ashes.

Toward evening Mrs. Hartman and her little boy returned from the mill. As they came to the top of a little hill and looked for the house, Mrs. Hartman was bewildered. She thought possibly they had taken a wrong road. But there was the huge pine tree that stood near the house. There could be no mistake. Just then the little boy cried: "*Mutter, wo ist unsere Haus?*" ("Mother, where is our house?")

The awful truth now sank into the soul of this good woman. She saw the rising smoke; she knew the Indians to be hostile; her family and her home were destroyed.

We cannot attempt to describe the deep sorrow of Mrs. Hartman — the long years that she mourned for those who were gone, her unwearied efforts to learn of the children that were taken captive by the red men.

The Indians forced the captive girls to go with them. In a day or two Barbara fell sick. At night she moaned with a raging fever. Regina was permitted to bring her water and comfort her as best she could as she lay on the damp ground.

Next morning Barbara could not walk. The Indians motioned to Regina to carry her on her back. This she tried to do, but sank under the burden.

The Indians consulted for a moment. Then one of them walked up to the sick girl and sank his tomahawk into her brain. The body was afterwards found by friends of Mrs. Hartman and carried back to the old home for burial.

This was a great relief to the bereaved mother. If only Regina, too, were dead, if it were not the will of God that she return alive, what a burden would be lifted from her breaking heart.

Regina, after the death of her sister, clung to little Susie. On they tramped for many days, going they knew not where. At length they came to an Indian village, and here they ended their journey. To their infinite delight, the two girls were permitted to remain together. They were assigned to an old Indian squaw, who lived alone in her wigwam at the edge of the village.

Regina was given the name Sawquehanna, which means "The White Lily." She had to grind corn, to gather whortleberries, and to wait on the old woman in many ways.

Years passed away, and Regina felt that she was forgetting her native language. Often she would go out alone and repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, as she had learned them long ago, and she would sing the religious songs she had learned in German that she might not forget the language. One of these songs began:

*Allein, und doch nicht ganz allein bin ich.*  
(Alone, and yet not all alone am I.)

But as she grew to womanhood she almost forgot this, too, and she lost the power to pronounce her own name, Regina. Her remembrances of the home of her childhood—the

little cabin among the trees, the happy family, the blessed face of her mother, the awful scenes of that dreadful last day — these seemed like strange dreams, and the meaning of it all she could not understand.

But at last the cruel war was over. When peace came the Indians were obliged to restore all the white children they had stolen, of whom there were several hundred.

Hope began to rise in the heart of Mrs. Hartman. Officers came and persuaded her to make the trip to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, as many other bereaved parents were doing, because there were many unclaimed children there who had been rescued from the Indians.

Mrs. Hartman went to Carlisle. The children were placed standing in a line as the parents passed along trying to identify them. Now and again a shout of gladness arose and everybody cheered, as some one recognized a long-lost child. Mrs. Hartman burst into tears. She had failed to find her lost Regina.

Again she passed along scanning every girl. There was a tall Indian-looking girl, a young woman, whom the good mother looked at intently. It was nearly ten years since her daughter had been stolen. She must be almost a woman now. Might this not be she? The girl returned the gaze for some minutes. There was no recognition, and the weeping mother passed on. She now prepared to go home in deeper sorrow than she had known since that awful day.

The officer in charge asked her if there was no mark or sign on her daughter's body by which she might recognize her. "No, not one."

"Is there no song that you used to sing to her? Songs linger long in the mind."

"Yes," said the mother, "we used to sing many German songs together."

“Try it.” And Mrs. Hartman walked again before the line and sang in a low, tremulous voice:

*Allein, und doch nicht ganz allein bin ich.*

There was a shout from the tall Indian-looking girl. She joined in the song and leaped to her mother's arms.

Mrs. Hartman cried in a faint, gasping tone, “O my God! my daughter, my Regina!” Everyone present shed tears of joy.

But Susie Smith still stood in the line, unclaimed; her parents were dead. Mrs. Hartman and Regina decided that she must go with them and live with them. She did, and a few years later Christian Hartman, now a man, was married to Susie Smith. A happy family indeed it was, and when a girl baby was born, they named her Regina.



## CHAPTER II

### THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR<sup>1</sup>

IN all the history of the world no other nations contended with each other so often and so long as the two greatest powers of Europe of that period—France and England. Though friends and allies in the recent World War, they had for ages been enemies more often, perhaps, than friends. The Hundred Years' War, with its intervals of peace, covered the latter part of the Middle Ages and ended in 1453, the year that marks the fall of Constantinople. Later they were at war again and again for more than a century, until the downfall of Napoleon at Waterloo, in 1815. This last series of wars was waged in a large measure for the possession of North America.

#### EXTRAVAGANT CLAIMS

Three early colonial wars were fought, each taking the name in America of the reigning British sovereign of the time, but the vital question between the rival claimants of North America remained unsettled. After the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle had been signed (1748) a commission of two Englishmen and two Frenchmen sat in Paris for many months endeavoring to adjust the French and English boundaries in America; but they labored in vain.

The first subject in dispute was the bounds of Acadia. The Treaty of Utrecht, 1713, ceded it to England without

<sup>1</sup> This chapter is taken almost wholly from Elson, *History of the United States*, Chap. VII; The Macmillan Company.

defining its bounds, and thus planted the seeds of future quarrels. The French now contended that Acadia comprised only the peninsula of Nova Scotia, while the English claimed that the bounds formerly given to it by the French must now be adhered to. By these bounds the vast territory comprising northern Maine, New Brunswick, and a great portion of the St. Lawrence Valley was included in Acadia. While this question was pending, a more important and immediate one came up for solution, namely, the ownership of the Ohio Valley.

This valley of the "Beautiful River" was a princely domain. It extended southward from Lake Erie and westward from the base of the Allegheny Mountains, comprising an endless succession of hills and valleys, watered by innumerable crystal streams, and stretching on and on until it merged at length into the greater valley of the Mississippi. The French claimed this vast region as a part of the great basin of the Mississippi discovered by Marquette and La Salle, and now secured by a cordon of forts from Canada to the sunny climate of the Gulf of Mexico. The English claimed it on two grounds, both of which were as shadowy as the claims of the French: first, the early charters of Virginia and of other colonies (based on the Cabot discoveries) which covered the unknown regions westward to the equally unknown "South Sea;" and second, the claims of the Iroquois. The Iroquois had been acknowledged British subjects by the Treaty of Utrecht; and their lands were therefore British territory, and their conquests were considered British conquests. Roving bands of these Indians had, at various times, traversed this western country, and had here and there driven off the natives or gained some trivial victory; and the English now claimed many thousands of square miles in consequence of these "conquests." They

"laid claim to every mountain, forest, or prairie where an Iroquois had taken a scalp."<sup>1</sup>

The claims of both nations were extravagant in the extreme. If the French had had their way, the English would have been confined to the narrow space between the crest of the Alleghenies and the Atlantic. If the English boundaries had been accepted, the French would have been hemmed within a small portion of Canada, north of the St. Lawrence River.

Both nations were now moving to occupy the Ohio Valley. The governor of Canada sent Céloron de Bienville, who floated down the Allegheny and Ohio rivers with a company of Canadians and Indians, and took formal possession in the name of his king. At the mouth of a river flowing into the Ohio, he would choose a large tree and nail to it a tin plate bearing the arms of France, while at the root of the tree he would bury a leaden plate inscribed with the statement that the country belonged to France. This was done at many places along the Ohio.<sup>2</sup>

During this same year, 1749, the English made a far more rational and tangible move toward securing the coveted territory. The Ohio Company was formed; it was composed of a few wealthy Virginians, to whom King George II granted five hundred thousand acres of land, between the Monongahela and Kanawha rivers, free of rent for ten years, on condition that one hundred families be settled and a fort be maintained there by the company. Then the French made an important move. They built forts at

<sup>1</sup> Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, Vol. I, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> The plate buried at the mouth of the Muskingum was found half a century later by some boys while bathing. Part of it was melted into bullets, and the remainder is now in the cabinet of the American Antiquarian Society. The plate buried at the mouth of the Kanawha was unearched by floods, and was found by a boy in 1846, ninety-seven years after it had been buried. It is in possession of the Historical Society at Richmond, Virginia.

Presque Isle, where Erie now stands, Fort Le Bœuf, twenty miles from this, and at Venango, on the site of the city of Franklin, Pennsylvania. This action alarmed Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia, as Virginia claimed the whole of the Allegheny Valley by right of her charter of 1609. The governor, therefore, determined to make a formal protest against the occupation of this territory by the French, and in choosing a messenger to make the journey to the newly built forts he unconsciously introduced to the future a young man who was destined to hold the first place in the heart of the great nation that was soon to arise in America — George Washington. Washington was a youth of twenty-one years and was adjutant-general of the Virginia militia. He had seen much experience in the woods as a surveyor. He was tall and stalwart, and he not only excelled all his fellows in athletic sports, but was specially noted for his moral character and for his unswerving fidelity to truth and duty. With the strength and vigor of youth, he and a few attendants made this perilous journey through the unbroken forest. Over hills and mountains, swamps and marshes, encountering deep snows and frozen rivers, and every peril of a wilderness yet untrodden by the foot of the pioneer, he carried the letter of Virginia's governor to the French commandant at Fort Le Bœuf. Washington's chief guides were Christopher Gist, a pioneer noted for his great skill in woodcraft, and Half King, an Indian chief whom he found on the banks of the Ohio. He was treated with much kindness by the French commandant, Saint-Pierre, who, however, declared in his answer that he would remain at his post, according to the commands of his general. He promised, though, to send Dinwiddie's letter to Marquis Duquesne, the governor of Canada.

Washington's return trip was full of adventure. Thinking

he could make better time, he left his horses and all his guides except Gist and started out on foot. At an Indian village called Murdering Town they were shot at by a native whom they caught and whom Gist would have killed but for Washington's interference. Reaching the Allegheny River, they attempted to cross on a raft, but Washington was thrown into the current among the ice floes. He regained the raft, thoroughly drenched with the icy waters. The two reached an island in the river, on which they were obliged to spend a bitterly cold night. Next morning the river was frozen over, and they crossed on the ice and were soon again speeding through the forest. They reached Williamsburg, Virginia, on January 16, whence they had started seventy-eight days before.

Washington thus won the warm favor of his governor and the attention of all Virginia. Before midsummer of this same year, 1754, Washington, in command of a small body of militia near a place called Great Meadows, fired on a body of Frenchmen under the command of Jumonville, and the latter with nine of his men was killed;<sup>1</sup> and the great war opened which was to shake two continents and to determine the language and civilization of one of them.

#### A VIEW OF THE BELLIGERENTS

It is in place here to take a momentary view of the two peoples, as we find them in America, who were about to grapple in a great, final struggle for the control of the continent. There are many points of resemblance. Both had occupied portions of the continent for nearly two hundred years, both were intensely religious, representing different forms of Christianity, and each was bigoted and intolerant and jealous of its rival. However, the religious zeal of

<sup>1</sup> But on July 4, 1754, Washington capitulated at Fort Necessity.



both peoples had become greatly modified during the two centuries that had passed, owing chiefly to the coming of many who sought only adventure or gain. In 1750 we look in vain through the English colonies for the Puritan of the Winthrop type, and it is almost equally difficult to find in Canada the spirit of Allouez or Marquette. Again, the French and English were alike in personal courage and in a jealous love of the respective countries from which they had sprung; both had imbibed that spirit of wild freedom inseparable from a life in the wilderness. But their points of difference are more striking than their points of agreement.

First, as to motive, or object, in settling in America. The chief object of the English was to find a home for themselves, far from persecution, where by patient industry they might build up a commonwealth; while secondarily, they would lead the red man to embrace Christianity.

The object of the Frenchman was three fold. First, he would build up a great New France which should be the glory of his native land; second, he would convert the native red man to his religion; and third, he sought the wealth to be derived from the fur trade. Different groups had different purposes. It was the French government, as reflected in its loyal sons, that aimed to build up a New France; it was the French Jesuit, typifying the religious sense of the nation, who labored to convert the Indian; it was the French settler who strove for the wealth of the fur trade.

But while the Englishman would found a new England by migrating in thousands, the Frenchman would do the same for his nation, not by migrating, but by making Frenchmen of the Indians. When the Englishman wished to marry, he found a wife among his fellow-immigrants, or imported her from England; the Frenchman desiring a wife found her in the forest — he married a squaw. The English generally

migrated in families or congregations; the French who came were mostly men, and thus they lacked the indispensable corner stone of the state — the family. One great blunder of the Frenchman was his failure to understand the Indian character. Evidently he believed the Indian more capable of civilization than actually was the case. The Frenchman devoted himself to lifting up the Indian, but more frequently he was dragged down to the Indian standards. He married the squaw and reared a family, not of Frenchmen, but of barbarians. The French made many thousands of nominal converts among the natives; but there is little evidence that the Indian was changed in habits or character by his conversion, or that he was led to aspire to a higher civilization.

A second important difference between the two peoples is found in their relation to their respective home governments. The English colonies had been left by their sovereign to develop themselves, and they grew strong and self-reliant. Two of them, Rhode Island and Connecticut, chose their own governors; and, aside from the ever irritating Navigation Acts, they all practically made their own laws. They were very democratic, and almost independent; and, indeed, but for want of one essential, union, they constituted a nation. The French colonies, on the other hand, were wholly dependent on the Crown. From the beginning the king had fostered and fed and coddled them, and they never learned to stand alone. As a whole they were a centralized, hierarchical despotism. As men they experienced an individual freedom, born of life in the wilderness; but political or religious freedom was beyond their dreams or desires.

Again, the English colonies opened wide their doors to all the world. The English Protestants were intolerant of

Catholics, it is true, and even of one another; but their religious strife was chiefly intellectual and theological, and they continued to dwell together on the same soil. The French, on the other hand, excluded all except Catholics from their new domains. The French Huguenots, who were ill at ease among the English in Carolina, petitioned their king to permit them to settle in Louisiana, where they might still be Frenchmen and still be his subjects; but the bigoted monarch answered that he did not drive heretics from his kingdom only to be nourished in his colonies, and they remained with the English and became a part of them.<sup>1</sup> And the narrow-minded king reaped the reward of his folly: while the English in America numbered, at the opening of the French and Indian War, at least twelve hundred thousand souls, the French population barely reached sixty thousand. The French king might have had, without expense to himself, a quarter of a million industrious people of his own nation dwelling in the Mississippi Valley; but he threw away the opportunity, and that vast fertile region was now peopled only by roving Indian hordes. The French had control of a territory twenty times as great as that held by the English; but the English had a population twenty times as great as the French.

In one respect, and one only, the French had the advantage over the English: they were a unit. The French king had but to command, and all Canada was ready to rush to arms. The English were composed of separate colonies — republics we may say — each enjoying much liberty without the responsibility of nationality; each joined loosely to the mother country, but wholly separate politically from all its fellows. Each colony had its own interests and lived its own life, and it was difficult to awaken them to a sense of

<sup>1</sup> Parkman, Vol. I, p. 22.

common danger. In 1754, Governor Dinwiddie appealed frantically and in vain to rouse his neighbor colonists to action. Indeed it required two or three years' warfare to awaken the English to a sense of their duty, and the result was that the French during that period were successful on every side.

The far-sighted Franklin saw this great defect — this want of union; and at a colonial conference held at Albany, in 1754, and known as the Albany Congress, he proposed a plan of union, known as the Albany Plan. This plan provided for a president-general to be appointed by the Crown, and for a council to be elected by the legislatures. But the English government rejected the plan because it was too democratic, while the colonists rejected it because they feared it would increase the power of the king. Thus the colonies plunged into this war, as into those that preceded it, without concerted action.

#### ATTITUDE OF THE INDIANS

An important consideration at the opening of this great struggle for a continent was the attitude of the Indians. Had all the tribes thrown their weight to either side, the other side would doubtless have been defeated. But it happened that they were divided. The majority of the Indians were with the French, and most naturally so. The Frenchmen flattered and won them by treating them as brethren, by adopting their customs, by marrying into their tribes, and by showing a zeal for their souls' salvation. The Frenchmen readily fell into Indian habits. Even the great Canadian governor, Frontenac, is said to have donned their costume at times and entered the uncouth dance where he would leap as high and yell as loudly as any child of the forest.

The Englishman, on the other hand, never received the native red man on the same footing with himself, never cared for his confidence, nor desired him as a neighbor. Often the two races were friendly, but a mutual suspicion was never absent.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the English wanted land, which the Indians were loath to yield, and the French wanted furs, which they were always ready to furnish. In view of these facts it is not strange that the majority of the natives sided with the French. Nearly all the Algonquin tribes were French in their sympathies. But the very notable exception we find in the fierce, warlike Six Nations, or Iroquois, of northern New York, who cast their lot with the English. The enmity of the Iroquois toward the French had its origin in a little skirmish which they had in 1609 with Champlain, when a few of their chiefs were slain. There was also another cause. The Iroquois and the Algonquins were deadly, hereditary enemies, and so they had been from a time far back, beyond the coming of the white man to North America; and the intimacy between the Algonquins and the French proved a serious barrier to the latter when they sought to make friends of the Iroquois.

Nevertheless, for a quarter of a century before the opening of the French and Indian War, the French were making every effort to win the Six Nations, and they would doubtless have succeeded but for the counter influence of one man, William Johnson, the British superintendent of Indian affairs. Johnson spent many years among the Iroquois, knew their language as he knew his own, married a Mohawk squaw, and was made a sachem of their tribe. It was he above all men who held the Iroquois firm for the English during the French and Indian War.

<sup>1</sup> Sloane, *The French War and the Revolution*, p. 34.



## GENERAL BRADDOCK AND FORT DUQUESNE

The earlier colonial wars did not originate in America; they were but reflections or echoes of far greater wars in Europe. But the French and Indian War had its origin on this side of the water, and was caused by boundary disputes between the two great European powers concerning their possessions in North America. And yet this was closely connected with the tremendous war that raged simultaneously in Europe, known as the Seven Years' War, in which Frederick the Great of Prussia contended, at first single-handed, and later in alliance with the British, against the powerful French and Austrian monarchies. The formal declaration of war between France and England was not made till May, 1756; but hostilities broke out in America two years earlier, and the year 1755 is marked by two of the most memorable events of the war — the ill-starred expedition of Braddock against Fort Duquesne and the drastic dealing with Acadia by the English.

One Sunday, late in February, 1755, a British general of stately bearing and in bright uniform came to the home of Governor Dinwiddie at Williamsburg, Virginia. The governor wrote to a friend. "He is, I think, a very fine officer, and a sensible, considerate gentleman. He and I live in great harmony." The gentleman was General Braddock, and he was accompanied by his secretary, William Shirley, son of the famous governor of Massachusetts. Braddock had come to be commander-in-chief of the English and American forces against the rising enemy on the north and west. Three months after reaching Williamsburg we find him at the Ohio Company's old trading station, now Cumberland, Maryland, with a motley army of some thirteen hundred men, partly British regulars and partly provincial

troops, with a sprinkling of Indians. After much trouble and delay in collecting wagons, food, and forage, which caused the commanding general, as well as his quartermaster, to "storm like a rampant lion," the army was ready to begin its march across the mountains to attack Fort Duquesne.

Fort Duquesne was a French post situated at the junction of the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers, the spot now occupied by the great iron city of Pittsburgh, with its teeming life and its hurrying thousands. When Washington made his famous trip to Saint-Pierre two years before, he took notice of this spot, and reported to his governor that an English fort should be planted there. A few months later a body of men were sent to carry out Washington's suggestion; but ere they had finished their task, several hundred French and Indians floated down the Allegheny, drove them away, and erected Fort Duquesne. To capture this strategic fort was Braddock's purpose, and he seemed never to dream of failure. Braddock was haughty and self-willed, but he was brave and not without ability. He refused to be advised by those who knew more of the foe and the country than himself. He looked with contempt on the Virginia troops, and made them feel their littleness in his eyes at all times. Nevertheless one of them, George Washington, was a member of his staff.

Three hundred axmen were sent before to cut a road, and the army began to move from Cumberland early in June. The march was long and toilsome, but the spring was in full bloom and there was much to attract the lover of nature's beauty. Over the hills and ridges, streams and deep gullies, up the steep mountain slopes, the brave, hilarious soldiers marched through the great primeval forest, and the woods rang with their shouts and music.<sup>1</sup> When

<sup>1</sup> See Parkman, Vol. I, Chap. VII.

they had come within eight miles of Duquesne, they suddenly met the enemy whom they sought. Braddock was surprised, but not ambuscaded, as is commonly stated. The enemy were about nine hundred strong; two-thirds of them were Indians, the rest French Canadians. They were led by Captain Beaujeu, who, seeing the English advance column, turned to the motley hordes behind him, waved his hat, and gave the signal. Instantly there was a terrible war-cry and the French and Indian forces spread into two parts to the right and left, hid behind trees, and opened a murderous fire. The English column wheeled into line and returned the fire with the utmost courage and steadiness. The enemy were scarcely visible from the beginning; they had adopted the true Indian mode of fighting. The first moments gave promise of English success. The French commander, Beaujeu, was killed at the beginning of the encounter, and most of the French and Canadians wavered and fled. But not so with the Indians. They quickly saw their opportunity — hiding places in plenty, with an enemy before them that did not know or would not adopt their mode of warfare. They swarmed on both flanks of the English in great numbers, firing, as rapidly as they could load, from behind trees, bushes, and fallen timber.

The English fired volley after volley, though they could see no enemy — only numberless puffs of smoke from which the bullets whizzed into their ranks like hail. At length they huddled together in disorder and confusion. Braddock knew nothing of Indian warfare, and he was too proud to learn. He galloped forward and back among the men, striving with threats and oaths to form them into battle lines, refusing to adopt Indian methods, and striking down with his sword men who hid behind trees. The Virginia

troops knew how to fight Indians, and they might have won the day had they been allowed to use Indian methods as they attempted to do. But the haughty general refused to permit it and, like the regulars, they were shot down by the invisible enemy. Braddock dashed to and fro like a madman, and at last, when his army had stood this frightful slaughter for three hours and more than two-thirds of his men were cut down, he ordered a retreat.

The battle was almost over. Four horses had been shot under Braddock, and he mounted a fifth, when a bullet was buried in his lungs, and he pitched from his horse and lay quivering and speechless on the ground. The ruined army was soon in full retreat, but only a third was left alive and unhurt. Of eighty-six officers, sixty-three were killed or disabled. The escape of Washington seemed miraculous; two horses were killed under him and four bullets pierced his clothing. Young Shirley, Braddock's secretary, was among the slain. The loss of the French and Canadians was slight, but a considerable number of the Indians were killed.

The fallen general was carried on a litter back over the rough-hewn road that had brought him to the field of death. His wound was mortal. He was at times silent for many hours, then he would say, "Who would have thought it? Who would have thought it?" It is said that during his last hours he could not bear the sight of the British regulars, but murmured praises for the Virginia troops and hoped he would live to reward them.<sup>1</sup> Four days after the battle he died, near the Great Meadows where Washington had fought Jumonville the year before. His body was buried in the middle of the road, as he had requested and, lest the spot be discovered by the Indians, the whole army — men, horses, and wagons — passed over his grave.

<sup>1</sup> Parkman, Vol. 1, p. 226.

## DISPERSION OF THE ACADIANS

Acadia had been settled by the French before the founding of Jamestown; but it was soon in the possession of the English, and again of the French; and so it passed back and forth like a shuttle between the two nations till the Treaty of Utrecht, when it became a permanent English possession. But its inhabitants were French and, led by their priests and encouraged by the home government, they retained the language and customs of France, refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the British king. Furthermore, they fostered a spirit of hostility to the British government, and it was feared that an outbreak against the newly founded English settlement at Halifax might occur at any time. Governor Duquesne wrote in October, 1754, to one of his subordinates, urging that a plausible pretext for attacking the English be devised. At the same time the English were planning the most drastic measures — no less than the removal by force of the entire French population from Acadia. Plans were completed during the following winter, and in the early spring the expedition set forth from Boston under Colonel Monckton, with John Winslow, great-grandson of a Mayflower Pilgrim, second in command. On the first of June they sailed into the Bay of Fundy and some time later began to carry into effect their cruel decision to deport the Acadians.

The Acadians, some seventeen thousand in number, were a simple, frugal, industrious, and very ignorant people, who lived apart from all the rest of the world. They raised their herds and cultivated their little farms in contentment, and made their clothes from wool and flax of their own raising. In the main they were happy and contented. Up to this time the British government had been fairly lenient with



them: it had granted them the free exercise of their religion and had exempted them from military service. Nevertheless, the Acadians, led by their superiors, fostered an unfriendly, almost a hostile, spirit against their government during the more than forty years of British rule.

Again the English thought it a favorable moment for exacting the oath of allegiance which had so long been refused. But it was again refused, and the painful business of deporting the Acadians began early in the autumn. The scenes at Grand Pré, made famous by Longfellow's "*Evangeline*," furnish a fair sample of the whole. This section was under the charge of Winslow, and he wrote that the duty before him was the most disagreeable of his life. Grand Pré was a quiet rural village, surrounded by broad meadows, their green slopes dotted with farmhouses. It was now late in August, and the waving fields of grain betokened the industry and thrift of the simple inhabitants. Winslow, with a body of troops, was encamped at the village, and he issued an order for the men of the community to assemble at the church on a certain day to hear a decree of the king; and the glittering bayonets of the soldiers warned them in unmistakable language of their peril if they refused. The men, clad in homespun and wholly unarmed, assembled in the church to the number of four hundred and eighteen, and heard the fatal decree that their houses and lands and cattle were forfeited to the Crown, and that they, with their families and household goods, were to be removed from the province. The men were thunderstruck at the announcement; however, as Winslow says, many of them did not then believe that the decree would be carried out. But it was carried out with merciless severity, and within a few weeks hundreds of them were launched upon the sea for unknown shores, while the lowing of the herds and the

howling of the dogs could alone be heard from the desolate farms that had so lately been the scene of life and peace and plenty. Other similar scenes occurred in various parts of Acadia; but the majority of the people escaped to the forests and could not be captured. More than six thousand in all were deported, families usually being kept together. They were scattered among the English colonies from New Haven to Georgia. Many of them afterward returned to Canada, some to their old homes in Acadia; and a large number of them made their way to the west bank of the Mississippi, in Louisiana, where their descendants are still to be found.

It is difficult to pronounce judgment on this merciless dealing of the English with these simple, untutored people of Acadia. History has generally pronounced the deed a harsh and needless one that has left an indelible stain upon its perpetrators. Assuming that the English had a perfect right to the province, they employed, after forty years of forbearance, perhaps the only means, aside from extermination, by which they could secure their ends and crush opposition to their government. Assuming, however, that might does not make right, the English should not have owned Acadia at all. They held it only by the doubtful right of conquest. The land had been settled and was occupied by the French and, if there is a standard of human rights above the rulings of kings and governments and the results of unholy wars, these people should have been permitted to choose their own sovereign. Viewing the matter in this light (as the Acadians doubtless did) we must pronounce these simple people the victims of a dastardly outrage, and they must ever elicit the sympathies of mankind.

## WILLIAM PITT

For more than three years the English cause languished for want of a leader, while the French had found one of great vigor and ability in the person of General Montcalm. The region of Lake Champlain was won by the French owing to the masterly leadership of Montcalm. The English seemed doomed to failure in the great contest. Then came William Pitt.

Pitt was the greatest Englishman of his generation. He came into power in the summer of 1757 and his comprehensive mind quickly grasped the situation. He soon changed the succession of defeats into a succession of victories and, though he never crossed the Atlantic, it was chiefly on account of his superb leadership that England and not France became the possessor of North America, and that Canada was secured to the British Empire. Within one year the great French fortress of Louisburg was in the hands of the English. Fort Duquesne was captured by the English and renamed Pittsburgh, and the flourishing city that grew up on the spot retained the name — a perpetual monument to the memory of the great Commoner. Then came the most notable victory of the war.

Pitt's success during his first year of power was marvelous. He had played a winning hand in the terrible war that convulsed Europe at the time, and had won the most signal victories in America. Louisburg, Frontenac and Duquesne had fallen before his victorious armies, and the French hold on the Ohio country was entirely broken. Pitt now planned still greater things for the coming year — no less than the complete conquest of New France, and the expulsion of French authority from all North America. General Stanwix was to guard the frontier between Pittsburgh and

the lakes; General Prideaux and Sir William Johnson were to advance on Montreal by way of Niagara; while Amherst, who had been made Commander-in-Chief, was to lead an army to the Champlain country. But the most important expedition of the season was to be sent against Quebec under the command of James Wolfe, who had displayed great courage and ability at Louisburg.

#### FALL OF QUEBEC

Quebec is situated on a promontory in the northwestern angle made by the junction of the St. Charles River with the St. Lawrence, and from the former extends a table-land eastward to the beautiful falls of the Montmorency, about seven miles from the city. This plateau was occupied by Montcalm with an army of nearly seventeen thousand men — regulars, Canadians, and Indians. Back of the city, on the north bank of the St. Lawrence and westward from the mouth of the St. Charles, lay the Plains of Abraham,<sup>1</sup> which had been left unguarded, as the rocky steep was supposed to be inaccessible from the river.

General Wolfe was still in his youth; he had just passed his thirty-second year. In appearance he was uncomely, and his health was delicate; but the fire of genius sparkled from his eyes. At the capture of Louisburg his reputation was greatly enhanced, and the keen eye of Pitt now singled him out to command the perilous expedition to Quebec. Wolfe had spent the winter in England and had won the heart of an English girl; and now he gave her and his beloved mother a fond and final good-by, and launched out upon the journey from which he was not to return.

His fleet, bearing eight thousand men and commanded by

<sup>1</sup> So called from Abraham Martin, who had formerly been the owner of the plateau.

Admiral Saunders, entered the St. Lawrence in June, and on the 26th it was anchored off the island of Orleans, but few miles below the city of Quebec. In the English army we find Colonel Monkton of Acadian fame, and Guy Carlton, William Howe, and Isaac Barre — all afterward famous in the Revolution. Wolfe made his camp on the eastern bank of the Montmorency, near its mouth, and opposite the encampment of Montcalm. The dreary weeks of the summer were spent by the two armies lying, each in view of the other, waiting and watching for some advantage. Wolfe was anxious for a general engagement; but Montcalm, distrusting his Canadian and Indian allies, steadily avoided one.

As the summer wore away and the situation remained unchanged the disappointment of Wolfe threw him into a dangerous fever. At length it was determined to attempt to scale the heights of Abraham and bombard the city from there, or force Montcalm into an engagement in defending it. The resolve was a daring and heroic one, but the desperate courage of Wolfe was unlimited. He had just risen from a bed of illness; his fever had subsided, but he was further afflicted with an incurable disease, and he had reached the condition in which a soldier is at his best — he had no hope of returning alive to his native land. To his physician he said, "I know perfectly well that you cannot cure me; but pray make me up so that I may be without pain for a few days, and able to do my duty."<sup>1</sup>

The English broke up their camp, and on that moonless night before the fateful day they moved as silently as possible up the river till they had passed the sleeping city. Wolfe had a strange presentiment of death. To a lifelong friend on his flagship he gave a miniature of his affianced

<sup>1</sup> Parkman, Vol. II, p. 268.



bride and requested that it be returned to her. While on the deck of one of the boats he recited with deep pathos portions of Gray's "Elegy," especially the stanza ending with —

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Some hours before dawn the English vessels landed the soldiers on the north shore, beneath the rocky steeps that led to the Plains of Abraham, and the men were soon clambering up the cliffs. At the coming of dawn the ever vigilant Montcalm was amazed to find that his enemy had outwitted him — that the heights above the city were crowned with long and threatening lines of British soldiers. The French commander saw that he must do one of two things: abandon the city to its fate and save his army by flight, or grapple with the enemy in a final, desperate struggle for Canada. Montcalm chose to fight, and before noon the two armies were engaged in a fierce conflict. The battle was short and decisive. The French gave way, and ran for their lives, and a few days later the city of Quebec passed into the hands of its British conquerors.

But the English paid dearly for their victory. Their noble commander had fallen to rise no more. During the battle Wolfe had hurried here and there amid the hail of bullets, urging and encouraging his men. Twice wounded, he continued his efforts, until a ball lodged in his breast and he sank to the ground. He was carried to the rear and offered surgical aid. "There is no need," was his answer; "it is all over with me."

The next moment he was informed that the French were in full retreat. He received the news as one awakened from a dream. Then, turning upon his side, he murmured in a low voice, "Now, God be praised, I shall die in peace," and a moment later his soul had passed into eternity.

A similar fate befell Montcalm, the noblest Frenchman of them all. While guiding his flying troops toward the city gates, he received a wound that caused his death. On being informed that his wound was mortal, he answered, "I am glad of it." He then asked how long he had to live, and was answered by the physician that he would probably die within twelve hours. "So much the better," was his reply; "I am happy that I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec."

The body of the dead commander, followed by a sorrowing multitude, was borne through the dusky streets of the city. Beneath the floor of the Ursuline Convent, in a grave partially made by a bursting shell, the remains of the great Frenchman were laid to rest. A few days later the British flag was unfurled on the citadel of Quebec and there it waves to this day.

Measured by its results, the battle of Quebec was one of the most important ever fought in America. France made a desperate effort the following year to recover the city, but an English fleet came to the rescue, and the effort was vain. Montreal soon after surrendered to General Amherst, and French dominion in America was ended. The conflict had been raging at intervals for a hundred years. The fall of Quebec practically ended the war in America, but a treaty of peace was not signed until three years later, owing to the mighty conflict, known as the Seven Years' War, that was still raging in Europe. Meantime Spain came to the rescue of France, and in consequence lost possession, for a time, of Cuba and the Philippine Islands which were conquered by England in 1762.

The Treaty of Paris, signed in 1763, stands alone among treaties for the magnitude of its land cessions. England gave Cuba and the Philippines back to Spain and received

Florida instead. France ceded to Spain, in compensation for Florida, the city of New Orleans and that vast tract<sup>1</sup> west of the Mississippi known as "Louisiana." To Great Britain, France surrendered all the rest of her American possessions, including the Ohio Valley, Canada,<sup>2</sup> Cape Breton, and all her islands except two in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Thus France lost everything, and henceforth that country had no footing on the mainland in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>3</sup>

But these vast land cessions did not constitute the chief results of this conflict. As before stated, the trend of civilization in North America was to be determined by the outcome of the French and Indian War. Gallican civilization differed widely, as it does to this day, from Anglo-Saxon; and the result of this war was that the latter must prevail, not only in the future nation that was soon to come into existence, but also in the vast dominion on the north now wrested from France to become a part of the British Empire. The war did much also for the English colonists. It brought them into contact with one another, led them to see as never before that their interests and destiny were common, and prepared them for the political union that was soon to follow. It awakened in them a self-consciousness and brought out clearly the true relations between them and the mother country.

<sup>1</sup> The cessions of Louisiana and Florida were made in 1762.

<sup>2</sup> In view of the present greatness and future prospects of Canada, it is a strange fact that the English seriously considered leaving Canada, "a wild and barren country," to the French and accepting instead Guadeloupe Island in the West Indies. The French preferred to retain the island because of its sugar production. Franklin, who was then a good Englishman, wrote a pamphlet advocating the acceptance of Canada because contiguous to the colonies, though admitting that Guadeloupe Island was of great value.

<sup>3</sup> Except the brief possession of Louisiana, 1800-1803, by Napoleon Bonaparte.

## CONSPIRACY OF PONTIAC

The fall of French dominion in Canada and the West left the Algonquin Indians unprotected. Since the days of Marquette and La Salle the many tribes of this great family had lived in harmony with the French, and during the late war had been their faithful allies. But they now found in their new masters a people very different in their attitude toward the red man. The French had treated them as equals and brethren; but the English, while they often made friends among the various tribes, never went far out of their way to conciliate them. And now, at the close of this long war, their feelings toward the allies of their enemy were anything but cordial. The French had lavished presents upon them, but the English doled out blankets, guns, and ammunition with a sparing hand.

The proud-spirited Indians were exasperated at the patronizing air of the English, and the rising flame was secretly fanned by the Frenchmen who were still scattered among them. A conspiracy was soon formed to massacre all the English garrisons and settlers along the frontiers of Virginia, Pennsylvania, and the regions of the Great Lakes. The leader of this great movement was Pontiac, one of the ablest Indian warriors ever known to the white race in America. Pontiac belonged to the Ottawa tribe, but it is said that his mother was an Ojibway. He came to be chief of both tribes and of several others, and he was now the soul of the great conspiracy against the English. On a certain day in June, 1763, to be determined by a change of the moon, every English post was to be attacked and the garrison murdered, and all the whites were eventually to be driven eastward beyond the Alleghenies.

Pontiac visited many of the tribes and won them by his

extraordinary eloquence. To others he sent messengers, each bearing a wampum belt and a red-stained hatchet. Almost every tribe of the great Algonquin family, and one tribe of the Six Nations, the Senecas, joined in this conspiracy.<sup>1</sup> So adroitly was the plot managed that the attack was made almost simultaneously in all parts, and every English post fell into the hands of the savages except three, — Detroit, Fort Pitt, and Niagara. Of these three Detroit, attacked by Pontiac in person, was successfully defended by Major Gladwyn,<sup>2</sup> Fort Pitt was saved by Colonel Bouquet, and Niagara remained free from attack.

The war continued at intervals for three years, when the Indians yielded, and agreed to a treaty of peace. Pontiac a few years later went to the Mississippi Valley, where he

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Johnson was a power among the Indians, and, with all his shortcomings, he did a great service for his countrymen in keeping the Iroquois (except the Senecas) from joining the great conspiracy. It was to him that Pontiac came to arrange a treaty of peace in 1766, making the long journey to Oswego, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Pontiac's plan for capturing Detroit was very skillful, but it miscarried. It was not unusual for the Indians to come into the fort and amuse the garrison with their rude games and dances. Pontiac's plan was to lead his warriors within the fort on a pretended friendly visit, each to hold a weapon hidden beneath his cloak, and at a given signal to fall upon the English and murder them to the last man. But on the day before this was to occur, an Indian girl, well known to the English, revealed the plot to Major Gladwyn, and when the Indians came they found the white men drawn up in battle line and armed to the teeth. Pontiac did not give the signal, but afterward attacked the fort, and besieged it unsuccessfully for several months, when it was relieved by General Bradstreet. Gladwyn and Pontiac had fought on opposite sides in Braddock's battle near Fort Duquesne. Pontiac kept two secretaries, one to read his letters and the other to answer them, and he managed to keep each ignorant of what the other did. To carry on the war he secured loans from the Canadians and gave promissory notes written on birch bark, signing his name by making the totem of his tribe, the figure of an otter. Every note was paid in full. On hearing that a trusted friend of his, a Canadian, had been offered a bushel of silver to betray him, Pontiac went to the friend's house and slept there all night to show his perfect confidence. The genius of Pontiac was very remarkable, and had his great powers been devoted to uplifting and civilizing his race, his name would hold a conspicuous and abiding place in history.

The plan adopted at Michilimackinac was similar to that at Detroit. Here the Indians arranged to play a game of ball within the fort. The squaws



perished, like his great prototype, King Philip, by the hand of one of his own race. He was buried on the soil where St. Louis afterward rose and, as Parkman says, ‘the race which he hated with such burning rancor tramples with unceasing footsteps over his forgotten grave.’”

were to stand by with concealed weapons. At a certain signal the players ran to the squaws, seized the weapons, and began the bloody work. The English were unprepared, and few of them escaped alive. At Presque Isle the garrison surrendered after a terrible siege of two days. Sandusky was captured by treachery, and every man in the fort was put to death, except the commander, Ensign Pauli, who was carried to Detroit as a trophy. He was afterward given his choice of two things — to be put to death, or to marry a squaw. He was not put to death. (Drake, p. 85.)

## CHAPTER III

### DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

IT is generally considered that the most important single event in the history of this Western World is the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, at Philadelphia, by the Continental Congress, on July 4, 1776. This was the crowning act of the Revolution; without it there would have been no Revolution.

The word "revolution," when used in a political sense, means a fundamental change of government. If, therefore, the colonists had not succeeded in gaining their freedom and changing their form of government, the war would be known in history as simply a rebellion.

The Declaration of Independence did not win independence; it was simply an act of the Continental Congress, declaring what the people desired, what they felt of right belonged to them, what they determined to fight for. They all knew that it would require long years of bloody war to achieve their object. But it is true that the time of deciding, of determining on any act, is the supreme moment. All the effort that may follow in carrying out the decision, is, compared with the decision itself, as the body to the soul. The moment the colonists decided on independence was the supreme moment of the Revolution; and the declaring of that decision may rightly be deemed an event of such far-reaching importance that nothing else in American history can be compared with it.

Our school histories all tell something about this Declaration of Independence; but they have so many things to tell that only a short space can be given even to such an event. What schoolboy or schoolgirl would not like to know more of this Declaration — how it was brought about, and who did most to bring it about? Let us devote this chapter to the subject.

We celebrate the Fourth of July as our national birthday; but the second of July was the real original Independence day. John Adams wrote on the evening of July 2, 1776: "This day will be the most memorable in the history of America; to be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival, commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty, from one end of the continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore."

The Declaration of Independence was not the result of a sudden burst of enthusiasm, finding expression in a rash act of Congress; it was a growth, a deliberate step of the people.

#### LOVE OF THE COLONISTS FOR ENGLAND

The filial love of the colonists for England was very strong. The intensity of that love seems remarkable when we consider that most of the Americans were native born, few had ever seen England, and the ancestors of many had been driven from that country on account of their religion. Yet their hope of reconciliation with the King was deep-seated; at the beginning of the war few indeed thought of independence, and, when it first began to be talked about, it was very unpopular.

In November, 1775, five months after the battle of Bunker Hill, the legislature or assembly of Pennsylvania instructed its delegates in Congress "to dissent from and utterly reject

any propositions, should such be made, that may cause or lead to a separation from our mother country.”<sup>1</sup>

The legislature of New Jersey followed a few weeks later in almost the same language. In December the Maryland convention declared that the people of that province “never did nor do entertain any views or desires on independency.” New York and Delaware followed with similar statements; and we hear the same voice from the provincial congresses of New Hampshire and North Carolina.

George Washington wrote a letter the preceding year, in which we find this expression: “I am well satisfied that no such thing as independence is desired by any thinking man in all North America.” Years later he said that when he took command of the army at Boston he still abhorred the idea of independence. These few examples will show the general feeling during the first year of the Revolutionary War.

At the same time there were a few men who, from the beginning, seemed to foresee the end, and these were unwearied in their efforts to attain that end. Joseph Warren of Massachusetts, the patriot-hero who gave his life for the cause at Bunker Hill, used these prophetic words at the beginning of the war: “America must and will be free; the contest may be severe; the end will be glorious.” Samuel Adams, the most intimate friend of Warren, and James Otis of the same colony were among the few earliest leaders for independence. But, as stated above, the great mass of the people clung to the mother country with childlike affection and frowned upon every suggestion of a separation. How, then, came the spirit of independence to take possession of the American heart? The fact is the people were driven and goaded to do as they did. No other course was left them but abject servitude.

<sup>1</sup> See Frothingham, *Rise of the Republic*, p. 466.

## CAUSES THAT LED TO INDEPENDENCE

We wonder more at the slowness than at the haste of the colonists to seize the great prize. After being insulted with the hated Stamp Act, the Mutiny Act, the Boston Port Bill, and other indignities, they still longed for a reconciliation with England. Their petitions to the King were full of undeserved and almost fulsome praise for his Majesty, while they blamed Parliament for all the trouble. But this was all changed within a year. Their yearning for a reconciliation was changed to a determination never to be reconciled. No longer did they deal with Parliament; they ignored the crouching whelps, and grappled with the old lion himself. What brought about this great change? The chief causes are few.

First: The reception of the last petition to the King. This petition was agreed on by Congress in midsummer, 1775. It had been suggested by John Jay of New York, and drawn up by John Dickinson of Pennsylvania, both eminent men, true patriots, but wholly averse at that time to independence. The petition expressed the tenderest regard for the person of the King; it recited the wrongs that the colonists had endured; it then begged in the most respectful language that these wrongs be righted, that the old-time harmony be restored, so that the Americans could live in happiness and contentment under the British flag. The petition, known as the "Olive Branch" petition, was sent to the King by a special messenger, Richard Penn, who was a Tory. Penn hastened away with high hopes, and the hopes of America went with him. He reached London late in August. America waited breathless for the result. The eyes of all turned almost appealingly toward England.

The answer came late in October. It astonished every-



body. The King had declined to receive the petition at all, and refused to see the messenger that brought it! Sadly the people heard the news, and their sadness was mingled with anger and resentment. King George III had thus taken a fatal step toward estranging forever his subjects in the Western Hemisphere.

Second: The King's proclamation. On the next day after the result of the petition was published in the Philadelphia newspapers, the King's proclamation was laid before the American public. In this document, proclaimed just before Penn's arrival in England, King George had declared the colonists in a state of rebellion and no longer under his protection. This was another stunning blow. The people were exasperated in the extreme. The King expected to frighten them into submission, but the opposite effect resulted. Independence, that had been only whispered here and there, was now talked of openly on all sides.

Congress assumed a bolder tone. It answered the King's proclamation, almost defiantly. It appointed committees to correspond with foreign nations, and talked no more of reconciliation, nor put forth disclaimers of independence. This was in the first part of November, 1775, and from this day forward the majority of the people took no step backward in the great march toward freedom. It is true, however, that a conservative minority of the people, led by Dickinson of Pennsylvania, continued to oppose the idea of independence.

Third: The employment of foreign aid. The King of England sent an army of foreigners, known as Hessians, hired for the purpose, into the colonies to fight against his own subjects! Nor was this all; he stirred up the savage Indians against the Americans whenever possible, knowing full well that warfare with them meant the murdering of the innocent

— the mother and the babe — in addition to ordinary warfare.

The colonists were now convinced that their sovereign had no sympathy for them. He cared for America only from selfish motives, only for what he could make out of it for commerce and taxation. Could the Americans, as a self-respecting people, continue their allegiance to such a man, and to the country of which he was the sovereign?

#### PROGRESS TOWARD INDEPENDENCE

As soon as the full meaning of the attitude of the obstinate King had taken hold of the public mind, the air was filled with shouts of defiance and calls for independence. The people discussed the subject in town meetings, on the streets, in the fields, and at their firesides. The belief everywhere was that a reconciliation was impossible, and submission meant slavery. The spirit of independence spread from New England to Georgia, and took a powerful hold upon the people. It is true, the feeling was not unanimous. There were many Tories to the end, and even of the Whigs (but Patriots is a better word), especially in the middle colonies, many hesitated and counseled delay, as already noted. But the great body of the people came to favor, during the winter and following spring, a final break with England.

Public opinion was molded largely by the newspapers and by pamphlets. A vigorous pamphlet called "Common Sense," written by Thomas Paine, converted thousands. A great speech of Patrick Henry before the Virginia convention was published broadcast, and became a powerful force in molding the public mind.

But the man who stood first among the leaders of public opinion was Samuel Adams of Massachusetts. Adams was

a man of broad views and of the purest motives. He had been among the few who foresaw the end from the beginning. From the first he had opposed all petitions to the throne, and nothing made him happier than the contempt with which the King received them, for in this he saw independence. He believed in a glorious future for America; but first the colonies must be free from England, and to attain that end he ceased not to labor day and night, until the object of his heart was won. May the name of Samuel Adams ever be honored by the American people.

Not far behind this man in the great fight we must place his cousin, John Adams, who was acknowledged to be the most powerful debater on the floor of Congress. There are many other great names of that period with which every schoolboy is familiar.

The idea of independence gained rapidly all through the winter, and before many months of the year 1776 had passed, a large majority of the people favored it. But there had been nothing done officially. The colonies were still, in the eyes of the world, subject to England. It was April before any colony made an official move for independence.

To North Carolina must be awarded the honor of being first to act as a colony on this great subject.<sup>1</sup> On April 12, its provincial congress instructed its delegates in the general Congress at Philadelphia, "To concur with the delegates of the other colonies in declaring independency and forming foreign alliances." This movement was led by Cornelius Harnet, who was called the Samuel Adams of North Carolina. This was a beginning and a very important one. Before this the talk of separation from England had all been private talk; now there was official action by one of the famous Thirteen. The meaning was far reaching, and none

<sup>1</sup> Frothingham, p. 504.

could mistake that meaning. Not long did North Carolina stand alone. Rhode Island soon followed, and Massachusetts came third. In Massachusetts the voice of the people was heard through town meetings held all over the colony. There was but one voice, "Freedom, freedom from the tyranny of British rule."

The next to act was the Old Dominion, Virginia. The convention met at Williamsburg on the sixth of May. That convention listened to the eloquent Patrick Henry, whose burning words of the year before were still ringing through the land: "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains or slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others will take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death."

In that convention sat George Mason at the height of his great powers, and James Madison, not yet twenty-five years old, but one of the keenest and profoundest of lawyers. The Virginia convention went farther than any that acted before it. It instructed its delegates in Congress to actually propose independence before that body. This bold resolution was immediately sent by a special messenger to the Congress at Philadelphia.

Thus we see that the South and New England took the lead, while the middle colonies still hesitated. Let us now see what Congress is doing.

#### A VIEW OF CONGRESS

This Second Continental Congress was so important, and did such great things for America, that it is fitting that we notice briefly a few of its leading characters.

Many of the members were men of wealth and belonged to the greatest families in their respective colonies. Many attained eminence and fame in later years; but the majority

are unknown to fame except through this one act — signing the Declaration of Independence. The names of a few are familiar in every home in the land; such are those of Thomas Jefferson, the writer of the immortal document; John Adams, the second President; and Benjamin Franklin, whose fame long before the Revolution extended to the utmost bounds of civilization.

The three greatest of the colonies were Virginia, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania, and we find from these three the strongest delegations in Congress. Virginia's greatest son was in the field at the head of the army; but we find from that colony still remaining, in addition to Jefferson, Richard Henry Lee, who had been educated in England, one of the most brilliant statesmen of the time, and Benjamin Harrison, confidential friend of Washington, the father of one President and great-grandfather of another.

From Massachusetts we have the two Adams: John Hancock, one of the richest merchants of New England, and now president of the Congress, and Elbridge Gerry, afterward a member of the famous triple mission to France in 1797, governor of Massachusetts, and Vice President of the United States.

The Pennsylvania delegation was second to none. First, always first, the great Franklin; next, John Dickinson, of the same age as Washington, educated in London, a renowned writer against the tyranny of England — truly desiring independence but thinking the time too soon, he opposed the measure with great moral courage. In the same class stands James Wilson. His name, like that of Dickinson, is not at this day well known to the masses of the people. He was afterward a justice of the Supreme Court and professor in the University of Pennsylvania; he was perhaps the most learned lawyer in America. Let us not forget Robert Morris,



the wealthy Philadelphia merchant, who came forward in the dark days of the Revolution and supported the armies for a time from his own purse, but who afterward lost his fortune, and, in his old age, to the lasting disgrace of the United States, languished for several years in a debtor's prison!

There were men of note in this Congress from other colonies. There was Roger Sherman, the shoemaker statesman from Connecticut, who "never said a foolish thing in his life," who spent all the rest of his life, nineteen years, as a member of Congress; there were Cæsar Rodney and Thomas McKean, of Delaware, and Francis Hopkinson, of New Jersey, William Ellery, of Rhode Island, and Samuel Chase, of Maryland.

Truly it was an illustrious body of men. Here were future presidents, governors, ministers abroad, cabinet officers, and United States senators. Nearly all of them lived to be old and to see the new government take its place among the nations; and not one of them ever did or said anything to bring dishonor upon the new-born republic. The one who survived all his fellows was Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, Maryland, who died in 1832 at the great age of ninety-five years.

#### THE FINAL ACT IN THE GREAT DRAMA

The whole country was astir during the spring of 1776. Perils were threatening on every hand. The Howes were moving on New York; Carleton was threatening an invasion from the north; a British fleet was harassing the southern coast; while the merciless Indian was plying the tomahawk on the frontier. But the patriots, instead of being awed into submission, clamored the louder for independence. This showed not only a noble patriotism, but a courage

that all the world must admire. A great English writer has said, "America was never so great as on the day when she declared her independence."

Congress passed in May a resolution permitting the colonies to form governments of their own in defiance of British authority. This was true revolution, that is, a changing of their form of government. "Is not America already independent? Why not then declare it?" said the ever vigilant Samuel Adams.

Early in June the messenger from the Virginia convention reached Philadelphia. What his message was we have seen. On the seventh, Richard Henry Lee offered a resolution which was seconded by John Adams. Here are the words:

"That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved."

This was the true Declaration of Independence; it covered the whole subject. But the resolution was not now voted on. After three days debate it was laid on the table till the first of July. Congress thought best not to be hasty in dealing with so great a subject. In order to be ready to act when the right time came, a committee was chosen to draw up a suitable declaration. This committee was chosen by ballot; and Thomas Jefferson, receiving the highest number of votes, was made chairman, and thus became the writer of the immortal paper. The other members of the committee were Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston. Some of the colonies had not yet instructed their delegates to act, and the delegates would not vote on their own authority. By the end of June, all the colonies, except New York, had granted this authority.

On the morning of July 1, the members sat in their places; Lee's motion was taken off the table and was before the House; but no one said a word. The New Jersey delegates, who had just arrived, requested that the debate of three weeks before be repeated, that they might fully understand the subject. At first no one moved, but the eyes of all turned to John Adams. He saw that he was expected to speak; he had made no preparation, but his soul was burning with the subject. He now arose and made a speech which was no doubt the most powerful one delivered in Congress during the Revolutionary period. Not a word of this great effort has been preserved; but Daniel Webster has given us the spirit of it in his "Supposed Speech of John Adams."

Several members opposed the declaration, the leader of whom was Dickinson. He answered Adams as best he could; but he was on the wrong side, and years afterward he acknowledged it. The vote was taken on the evening of the next day. It was desired that no colony vote against the measure. Each colony had one vote, the majority of the delegates casting it, while the minority counted for nothing. Delaware had three delegates, but one of them, Cæsar Rodney, was absent in Delaware, and of the two present one was on each side. A messenger was sent with all speed for Rodney. On hearing the news he leaped on his black horse and started at full gallop for Philadelphia, eighty miles away. All day and all night he sped through forests and over streams.<sup>1</sup> This was a greater ride than the more famous one of Paul Revere; the more remarkable it seems, when we remember that Rodney was suffering from a cancer in the face, which afterward cost him his life. He reached the capital city just in time to cast his vote and save Delaware for freedom.

<sup>1</sup> Walton and Brumbaugh, *Stories of Pennsylvania*, p. 180.

The majority of the Pennsylvania delegates opposed independence; but, seeing that the tide was against them and not wishing their colony to be the only one to vote against the measure, two of them remained away and the rest cast the vote in the affirmative.

The resolution for independence passed on the second of July by the unanimous vote of twelve colonies, New York not voting. The second of July is, therefore, the real natal day of the United States — we must call them *colonies* no longer.

But it was necessary to put this great act into a fitting form of words, giving reasons for taking the step, before sending it forth to the world. Jefferson had this prepared. His document was now taken up, debated for two days, changed a little here and there, and adopted on the evening of the fourth. The same twelve states voted as on the second. New York added her vote a few days later, and the whole thirteen were now agreed on the great measure. The form adopted on the fourth was the “Declaration of Independence” with which we are all familiar; hence the Fourth of July has become our national holiday. When the Declaration was first sent out it was signed only by the President of Congress, John Hancock, and by the Secretary, Charles Thompson. It was also ordered to be engrossed on parchment; this was finished in several weeks, when all the fifty-six members signed it, most of them on the second of August. This parchment copy is now in Washington, kept by the Secretary of State.

The rest of the story is well known. The old Liberty Bell rang out the glad tidings of freedom. Night was turned into day with bonfires and illuminations. The Declaration was read in cities, towns, and villages, from the pulpit in the churches, from the public platform, everywhere, amid

shouts of joy and gladness from the people. It was read at the head of each brigade of the army, and the roll of the drum and the roar of cannon furnished the glad answer of the patriot soldiers. Thus the exultant multitudes welcomed the new day that was dawning. Thus was the United States of America launched upon the ocean of national life.



## CHAPTER IV

### INCIDENTS OF THE REVOLUTION

YOUR textbook has told you of the causes of the Revolution; also of Lexington and Bunker Hill, of Washington's taking charge of the army at Cambridge and at length driving Howe off to Halifax. Later the British general returned and Washington met him at New York. After various battles, Washington lost the city and the lower Hudson and fled from the enemy across New Jersey. Then he won a signal victory at Trenton, and another army won a far more important victory in the capture of Burgoyne and his army at Saratoga.

While the Hudson Valley was the main seat of war General Washington held his army in New Jersey to watch Howe, who remained with his army in the city of New York. But in midsummer Howe sailed away to the Chesapeake, and Washington marched across New Jersey and Pennsylvania to meet him.

In September, 1777, the two armies met on the banks of the Brandywine, a little stream in southern Pennsylvania. A desperate battle was fought, known as the battle of Brandywine. Washington was defeated. His army was much smaller than that of his enemy, and he was obliged to retreat toward Philadelphia.

Howe followed, and Washington saw that he could not save the city. Late in September, Howe occupied the American capital. But a week or so later he had to fight the Americans again at Germantown. Neither side won

much of a victory. Howe went back to the city and Washington encamped at White Marsh, not far away.

#### LYDIA DARRAH

While Washington was at White Marsh, Howe planned to make an unexpected night attack on the Americans; but his plan miscarried, and here is the cause:

Lydia Darrah was the heroine who probably saved hundreds of lives that night. She and her husband and children lived in a house just across the street from where General Howe had his headquarters in Philadelphia, and the British officers often came to her house for consultation.

One day an officer told her that he and his friends wished to occupy the usual upper room in her house that night, and said that he wanted all the family to go to bed early and the doors locked while he was in the house. After the consultation was over, he would wake her so that she could lock the door again when they were gone.

Lydia could not understand why such secrecy was enjoined, and the thought troubled her. But she carried out the order. The family retired early. Lydia let the officers in and retired to her room. But she could not sleep. She thought about the mystery of the night meeting of the officers, and feared that there was something serious in the wind. She rose from her bed and crept softly to the door of the room where the men were, applied her ear to the key-hole, and listened for some time.

At first she could distinguish nothing in the din of voices, but presently all became silent, and one man began to read a paper. It disclosed a plan to march secretly from the city on the night of December 4, catch Washington unprepared, and attack him at daybreak.

The meeting soon broke up. Lydia stole back to her room

and threw herself on the bed. Presently the officer came and knocked on her door. No answer. Again and again he knocked. At length she got up and came to the door, rubbing her eyes as if she had been roused from a profound slumber. She let the officers out, locked the door again, and returned to her room. For a long time she was in deep thought. How many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of lives of her countrymen she might save if only she could get word to Washington of the intended attack. But whatever was to be done must be done quickly, for it was only two days till the attack was to be made.

But it was a perilous business to play the informer. No one could pass the British lines without a written permit, and anyone caught as a spy must suffer death. Such are the rules of war. And yet the responsibility of Lydia Darrah was awful. How could she refuse to save many lives, even at the risk of her own? She spent a sleepless night, and by daylight her mind was made up.

In the morning she said to her husband, "We need flour, and I must go to Frankfort to-day and get a bag."

"Who is this person who wants a pass?" said the British officer, an hour later.

"Lydia Darrah," was the answer.

"Let me see — Lydia Darrah? Oh, yes, she lives over there. We often use her house. She's a good woman. Yes, give her the pass. Certainly."

A little later Lydia was speeding through the snowy streets toward Frankfort. About noon she met a horseman sent out by Washington (such as he always had on the road) to get information. She told him her secret. He thanked her and galloped away toward the army at White Marsh. That evening Lydia trudged into her home looking innocent enough, with a bag of flour on her shoulder.

Next night the British army marched silently out of the city and made ready for a grand surprise and assault. But when Howe came near he found Washington's army in a strong position, cannon mounted, men with loaded muskets drawn up in battle line.

It was the British that were surprised. Howe led his men back without firing a gun, crestfallen, and, as one of his officers said, "feeling like a parcel of fools." And they never knew the part played by Lydia Darrah.

#### VALLEY FORGE

A valley among the hills, some twenty miles from Philadelphia, through which the Schuylkill River winds, is known as Valley Forge. It was here that General Washington led his army; and here they spent a cold, severe winter, while the British occupied comfortable homes in Philadelphia.

A great many of the American soldiers wore clothing that was little better than rags. Many were without shoes or blankets. The first thing they did was to build cabins to shelter them. The cabins were one story in height, and each was made to accommodate twelve men. Their tables were made of rough boards, but there was very little to put on them. Often the men sat down to a meal of nothing but salt herring and potatoes.

Many of the farmers round the country refused to bring in their produce in fear that they would never be paid for it. Others were more patriotic. One farmer down in Delaware said he would rather drive his cattle to Washington as a gift than to sell them to Howe for a thousand dollars in gold.

Some of the soldiers had homes and families in Philadelphia, and their wives would sometimes pass through the British lines in the guise of market women and bring baskets of provisions to their husbands in camp. One, Mrs. Knight,

made a practice of doing this all winter, passing the British lines many a time unsuspected.

The men were not idle at Valley Forge. All through the winter they were drilled by Baron Steuben, a German nobleman who, like Lafayette, had come across the water to help in the cause of liberty. By spring Washington's army could measure up, man for man, with the British regulars.

One more story — one that has never before been put in print — and we leave Valley Forge. There was a little negro girl, seven years old, who was a slave in a family two or three miles from Valley Forge; for Pennsylvania had slaves in those days. Her name was Mary Macdonald.

The soldiers often tramped about the country in small groups and asked the farmers for something to eat. The owner of Mary Macdonald and his wife were very kind people and good patriots. They would have a few loaves of bread extra each day and cook a little more meat and vegetables than the family needed that they might feed the hungry soldiers.

Mary would stand at the window and watch, and when she saw them coming she would run and get the things prepared for them. One day when the family was away, and she was keeping house, two or three men came, and she went to get them food, but, lo! the cupboard was bare. She then thought of a basket of chestnuts which she had gathered in the fall, and asked them if they would like a handful of chestnuts.

"Yes," they answered, "anything that is good to eat."

She ran and got a handful for each. They were so pleased that she did the same for others day after day until her little store was gone.

The most interesting feature of this story is that Mary Macdonald related it to the author of this book one hundred



and twenty-five years after the event. He asked her many questions, and became convinced that she was telling the truth. She probably lived longer than anyone else in America or England who passed through the days of the Revolution. She died in 1905, at the Home for Aged Colored People, in Philadelphia, at the great age of one hundred and thirty-five years.

#### FRANCE TO THE RESCUE — FRANKLIN

In the midst of the suffering through the hard winter at Valley Forge, there came to the war-broken soldiers a bit of news that cheered their hearts as nothing had done since the Declaration of Independence. They yelled and shouted themselves hoarse with joy.

It was that France had recognized the independence of the United States, and had made a treaty of alliance with us. That meant immediate war between France and England. It meant that England would henceforth have two nations to fight instead of one; and it meant that American success in the end seemed now a certainty.

Why France did this is not of much importance. It could not have been because of her love for the Americans. She had met them but little except as enemies on the field of battle, in the colonial wars. It could not have been her love of liberty, for France was not a country of liberty at that time. Perhaps it was in part her hatred of England, for she was still smarting under the loss of Canada and the Ohio Valley. Also, she hoped for better trade relations with free America than she had had under British rule.

If a big boy abuses a little boy on the playground and another big boy comes along and takes the little boy's part, he will win the little boy's heart, whatever his motives. And so France won the American heart. We have not forgotten

to this day, and we should never forget, the aid given us by this great European power during the dark days of the Revolution.

But if there is any one person to thank above all others for this French treaty, it is not a Frenchman, but an American — Benjamin Franklin. Long before the Revolution, Franklin was famous all over Europe, and he was the only American who was well known abroad. The reader, of course, knows of the early life of Franklin — the story of the whistle, of his great desire for books, his apprenticeship in Boston to his brother as a printer, his running away to New York, where he walked the streets in search of work till he was weary and hungry; his tramping across New Jersey to Philadelphia, which became his home.

Franklin became famous for his studies in science, especially for his discoveries in electricity, and for Poor Richard's Almanac, which he began publishing in the year in which Washington was born.

When the men of the Revolution wanted a special messenger to go to France to try to persuade the French king to recognize America, their eyes turned to Franklin. He went to Paris, and was received almost like a king. Everybody had heard of him before. They had read his wise sayings and heard of his inventions and discoveries. When he reached Paris, the people shouted him a glad welcome and the king received him with marked honor. Indeed, Franklin became the rage for a time in Paris. Franklin badges were worn by fashionable ladies. Franklin hats and Franklin this and that were seen in the store windows. But Franklin soon got down to business. He labored in season and out of season for more than a year to secure the recognition of the independence of America.

Victory came at last. The surrender of Burgoyne in

October, 1777, led the French king to believe that the Americans would gain the final victory, and that it would be safe to enter into an alliance. He told Franklin that he was ready. The treaty was concluded in February, 1778, and the news reached America and Valley Forge late in the winter.

#### A VALIANT FRENCHMAN

The French alliance reminds us of one Frenchman in particular whom we must not pass by unnoticed. He was a young nobleman of wealth and high station — the Marquis de Lafayette.

Sitting one day at dinner in Germany where also sat a brother of the King of England, Lafayette heard the prince tell of the war his brother was carrying on with his colonists in America. Lafayette had an inborn love of liberty, and when, by further inquiry, he found that the Americans were fighting in the glorious cause of human freedom, he resolved to go to their assistance.

He applied to the French king, Louis XVI, for permission to take part in the American war, but the request was refused. This was before the king had made the treaty with America, and he did not wish at this time to offend England.

Lafayette, however, secretly purchased and fitted out a vessel, intending to go without consent. Probably he knew that the king at heart did not object, but only pretended, in order to keep peace with England. Lafayette sent his ship to a port on the coast of Spain, and was on the way to board it when the English minister at Paris insisted that he be arrested and detained. Lafayette was thereupon arrested by the king's order and imprisoned in southern France.

From this prison our hero escaped in the guise of a workman. He blackened his face, put on false hair, and with a

large board on his shoulder walked past the guards as a colored laborer. A carriage was in waiting, and ere long he was speeding for the boundary of Spain, which was not many miles away. When the keepers of the prison discovered that their prey had escaped, they sent riders on swift horses to overtake him; but they were too late, for as they came in sight of the fleeing carriage it crossed the line into Spain, and they dared not make the arrest outside of France.

Lafayette soon reached his vessel and put to sea. The captain did not know whither they were going, and when well out at sea Lafayette ordered him to steer for the United States. He refused, declaring that the English cruisers would capture them before they were half way across the Atlantic.

Lafayette then in a stern voice said:

"This is my vessel. I command you to steer for the American coast. If you do not I will put you in irons."

The man then obeyed, and a few weeks later they landed on the coast of South Carolina.

After boarding the *Victory* (for this was the name of his ship), Lafayette, writing a last adieu to his wife, used these noble words: "From love to me, become a good American. The welfare of America is closely bound up with the welfare of mankind."

Lafayette joined the staff of Washington, who soon came to love him almost as a son. He served valiantly through the war, and returned with high honor to his native land, with the consciousness of having done a noble service in the cause of liberty.

Half a century later, when the United States had become a rich and mighty nation, and when Lafayette was an old man, he came to America again, to visit the people he had fought for in his youth, as we shall notice in a later chapter.

## A TRIP TO THE SOUTH

Let us make an excursion to the South and see what they are doing there.

We left Washington and his faithful army at Valley Forge. But in the spring the British left Philadelphia and moved across New Jersey to New York. Washington followed and overtook them at Monmouth, New Jersey, where a heavy battle was fought. The British then went on to New York, and Washington lingered near to watch them.

So meager was the success of the British at the North that they decided to try their fortune in the South. An army was sent to Georgia. It soon captured the city of Savannah and overran the whole State of Georgia. A year or two later the city of Charleston and the whole State of South Carolina fell into British hands. The patriot army had been captured at Charleston, and it seemed that the patriot cause was dead in that section.

But it was not dead. Thousands of devoted patriots were true to the cause of liberty during these dark days, and only waited an opportunity to strike a blow for their country.

I shall relate two or three incidents to show the devotion of the southern people to the cause of the Revolution.

There was an old gentleman named John Gaston who lived near the Catawba River, in South Carolina. He was a patriot to the core. He often sent his son fifty miles to get a newspaper so as to keep track of the war. His sons and nephews, who were as true to the cause as himself, met one night at his house to confer as to how they could best serve their country.

While talking together a messenger came running to the house and told of a fearful massacre of a band of Americans by some British cavalry near a place called Waxhaw. The



young men grasped each other by the hand and vowed that they would suffer death rather than submit to the invaders.

A few miles away the enemy had a force of two hundred men in a strong position known as Rocky Mount. From here they sent agents to old Mr. Gaston to persuade him to take the oath of submission to the king, for they had heard that his influence was so great that he could control the whole neighborhood. The only answer of the old man was "Never!"

Soon after this he heard that the enemy was planning a raid on his house and plantation. He called his sons and nephews together, and they sent word to the young men of the neighborhood. In a few hours there were thirty-three stalwart young Americans, clad in hunting shirts, deer-skin caps, and moccasins, each with a knife in his belt and a rifle on his shoulder, ready to strike a blow in the cause of freedom.

The old man stood in his door and waved them a proud good-by as they crept noiselessly along an Indian trail to where the British were encamped. Swiftly and hard they struck, and the enemy, outnumbering them seven or eight to one, were thrown into hopeless confusion, and those who were not killed or wounded ran for their lives.

The young men remained in the field fighting the enemy wherever they could. Soon after this the aged Mr. Gaston heard that the British intended to come in force to take him, dead or alive. He mounted a horse, bade his wife and grandchild good-by, and rode into the forest to a place of safety. Scarcely had he gone when the British came. Mrs. Gaston and her grandchild had hidden in a near-by thicket, where they crouched in terror till the marauders were gone. The British carried off everything they could; but Mrs. Gaston had taken with her the family Bible, which is preserved by her descendants to this day.

## A TALE OF TWO PREACHERS

In the wilderness of South Carolina, not a great many miles from Rocky Mount, there was a settlement of Scotch-Irish, a congregation who had come to America with their pastor, Rev. William Martin, but seven years before.

So devoted to their religion were they that they built a log church before many of them had built their own cabins, living in tents in the meantime.

Their sympathies were all with the Americans in the war, though few of them had gone to join the army. When they heard of the Waxhaw massacre they were horrified, but waited to hear the opinion of their good pastor before taking any action.

Sunday came, and the whole neighborhood gathered at the log meetinghouse. Everybody was stirred up over the news from Waxhaw. Men stood in little groups discussing the approaching danger. At length the Rev. Mr. Martin arrived. He was a large, powerful man, learned and eloquent, with a voice that rang far out in the forest when he preached. On this day his words seemed more eloquent than ever before.

He told how their forefathers in Scotland had fought for their liberty; how the Scriptures approved the rising of a people against wicked rulers; how the Lutherans at the time of the Reformation had to fight for their existence.

“Talk and angry words will do no good. We must fight.”

The services over, the grave face of each man — and of each woman as well — took on a determined look. After a long, serious consultation the men went to their homes. Here is a sample of how they broke the news to the women. One, William Anderson, walking home with his wife, was silent for a long time. His wife spoke first:

"I think, William, that little Lizzie and I can finish tending the crops." And William answered:

"I am glad o' that, Nancy; I was silent, for I didna ken how to let you know, but to-morrow morning I leave home."

In fact, all the able-bodied men of the congregation had agreed to meet next morning. That night Nancy Anderson rose soon after midnight and spent the remaining hours baking bread and biscuits and packing a bag of food for her husband to take with him. The men met at the appointed time, and enlisted in the service, many of them remaining under arms until the enemy was driven out of the state.

The other instance of a preacher and the war is more famous than the one given above. The minister was John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg, pastor of a large German Lutheran church at Woodstock, Virginia.

Washington knew Pastor Muhlenberg well, knew the mettle of the man, and asked him to accept a colonel's commission in the army. The offer was accepted, but for a time the matter was not made public.

Some time after this, one Sunday after Mr. Muhlenberg had preached an eloquent sermon to a large congregation, he stepped out from the pulpit and declared that there was a time for everything — a time to preach and a time to fight.

"And now is the time to fight!"

So saying he threw off his ministerial robe and stepped forth in a full colonel's uniform.

He ordered drums to be beaten for volunteers, and it was not long before he had three hundred men of his own congregation under arms and ready for the field. They were led into battle by their pastor — a good example of combining religion and patriotism.

Pastor Muhlenberg became a major-general, and served under Washington for several years. His regiment, the Eighth Virginia, known as the "German regiment," was noted for its great steadiness and courage in battle, and it often received the highest praise from the commander in chief.

#### KING'S MOUNTAIN

There were many battles fought in the South, but here we shall notice only one — the battle of King's Mountain — and a strange sort of battle it was.

At the beginning of the war the battle of Lexington was fought on the American side by men who had not been soldiers, though most of them became soldiers afterwards. King's Mountain was fought by men who were not enlisted soldiers either before or after the battle.

The south country had been dreadfully ravaged by the royal armies, and the patriots were greatly discouraged. But when the cause of liberty seemed dark indeed there was a sudden change.

Lord Cornwallis sent Colonel Ferguson, in the autumn of 1780, with twelve hundred men, to ravage the Carolinas and gather in Tory sympathizers, and the news of the raid spread up the mountain slopes and beyond. In that back country lived hundreds of mountaineers — bold, brave men who were accustomed to fighting Indians and killing wild animals.

When these men heard of Ferguson's raid they determined to go after him. So eager were the men to go that a few hundred of them had to be drafted to stay at home to guard the settlements.

More than a thousand of these hardy backwoodsmen seized their muskets and poured over the mountains in search of Ferguson's army. Others joined them a'long the

way, and they were thirteen hundred strong when they reached the enemy. A motley crowd they were — pioneer farmers, mountain rangers, Indian fighters, and hunters. Each man wore a sprig of hemlock in his hat. Dressed in their hunting shirts, they were fearless and boiling with patriotism, and every man was a dead shot with a rifle.

As they passed by a farmhouse they found a man in the cellar whom Ferguson had left there to spy on the Americans. He was dragged out and told that the only way to save his life was to turn spy on the other side. He did so, and informed the patriots of the movements of the British. When asked how they could identify Ferguson, he at first refused to tell; but, seeing his life in danger, exclaimed, "He wears a large check shirt over his uniform."

Ferguson had posted his men on a spur of King's Mountain, not far from the boundary between the Carolinas. Here the mountaineers found him on October 7, 1780, and a desperate battle was soon in progress.

The Americans surrounded the hill and attacked the enemy from all sides. Again and again they surged up the slope and were driven back. But they always came again, and at last the British were worn out and could fight no longer.

Hundreds of them lay bleeding on the ground, the victims of the sharpshooters' bullets, while the American loss was slight.

Ferguson was a man of foolish valor. He refused to give up when he knew that he was beaten. He struck down with his sword a flag of truce raised by one of his men. He then made a fatal dash through the American lines for liberty. But the patriots remembered the "large check shirt over the uniform." They had heard of his cruelty in ravaging the country, and now was their opportunity. Five rifles were



leveled at the dashing Briton, and he fell pierced by five mortal wounds.

The remnant of his army then gave up and became captives. The victory of King's Mountain was complete. The men who won it hied themselves back to their crude civilization beyond the mountains. They had struck one telling blow for liberty, and never again was the patriot cause at so low an ebb as it had been before.

Soon after the victory at King's Mountain, General Nathanael Greene arrived in the South with an army, and to him the South was chiefly indebted for clearing that section of the fearful raids of the enemy. Several hard battles were fought, the last being at Eutaw Springs on September 8, 1781.

In this battle the brave young cavalry leader, Colonel William Washington, a relative of the Commander in Chief, was wounded and taken prisoner.

He was carried to Charleston and placed in a hospital. As he lay there day after day slowly recovering from his wounds, he was attracted by a beautiful young lady who came daily to the hospital and moved about like a ministering angel among the suffering men, speaking words of comfort and encouragement to all. She was Jane Elliot, a rich young woman who had given much of her property to found hospitals and aid the suffering patriots.

Colonel Washington came to admire and then to love Jane Elliot, and two years later, when the war was over, they were married. Probably the brave young officer never regretted that he was wounded and captured at Eutaw Springs.

One more story of the Carolinas. There was a widow named Jackson with two sons, Robert and Andrew, aged fifteen and thirteen years. When the British raiders came

through their neighborhood, both the boys shouldered arms and went out to meet the enemy. Though Andrew was but thirteen, he was as tall as a man and as brave as a lion.

Both the boys were captured by the enemy. While confined in a farmhouse a British officer ordered Andrew to clean his boots. Andrew refused, saying:

"I am a prisoner of war, and claim to be treated as such."

The officer then struck him with his sword, and would have killed him, had not the boy saved his life by throwing up his hand; but he received a deep wound in the hand and another in the head. The boys were taken to Camden and thrust into a loathsome prison with many others, where they had to sleep on the damp ground.

The mother was one of the noblest of women. She had spent her strength and health serving the patriots. Now she made a long journey to Camden to seek the release of her boys. When she arrived both had taken the smallpox. She succeeded, and they started for home. Andrew walked the entire distance without hat or shoes while suffering with smallpox. Robert, too ill to walk, rode on horseback. A few days after they reached home Robert died. Andrew recovered.

Some months later the mother made another long trip to relieve some prisoners, leaving Andrew with friends. When asked why she sacrificed so much, she answered, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

Never again did Andrew see his mother. She died of a fever far from home, was buried by strange hands, and her grave was never found by her sorrowing son.

Don't forget this boy Andrew. He was a remarkable boy. Fifty years after these events he was President of the United States.

## AN AFFAIR AT YORKTOWN

Yorktown was a village on the coast of Virginia, and with a brief notice of what took place there we shall pass on from the Revolution to something else.

Cornwallis was greatly crippled by the British disaster at King's Mountain. He had lost the rich prize for which he had labored for two or three years — the control of the Carolinas. Instead of trying to win back this territory he moved northward into Virginia. Here he found our young Frenchman, Lafayette, who disputed every step of his progress. Lafayette's army was too small to give battle, but by quick movements it greatly annoyed and harassed the enemy. At one time the British commander thought he had Lafayette cornered, and he expected to capture his whole army.

"The boy cannot escape me," he declared. But the boy did escape. He had been schooled too long under Washington to be outwitted. In August, 1781, Cornwallis occupied Yorktown.

We left Washington, after the battle of Monmouth, near New York, where he remained for nearly three years guarding the Hudson Valley, which General Clinton threatened to invade. Suddenly Washington saw a chance to make a brilliant stroke. He joined his army with an army of Frenchmen, which had been sent over to help the Americans, and started for Virginia to capture Cornwallis. In order to keep Clinton in ignorance of his intentions, he guarded his secret so carefully that his own men did not know where they were going until they had almost reached the Delaware.

Cornwallis would have escaped by sea, but there was a French fleet in the bay. And he might have escaped by land, but here was Lafayette's army, now swelled to eight thousand men, lying across the peninsula. Late in August Washing-

ton arrived, and Yorktown was soon surrounded. The artillery was mounted, and day and night the boom of cannon swelled and rolled over the doomed city. The British at last saw that there was no escape, that there was nothing left but to surrender, and on October 17, precisely four years after the surrender of General Burgoyne, a white flag, a token of surrender, was seen waving above the British works at Yorktown.

Thus ended the long War of the Revolution. America had won, and two years later a treaty of peace was made in which the British Government acknowledged the independence of the United States. Long and loud were the shouts and rejoicings of the people, though at many a fire-side there were vacant chairs and in many a home there were broken-down men. Such was the price that our forefathers paid for the liberty we now enjoy.

## CHAPTER V

### FRAMING OF THE CONSTITUTION

IF there is one thing in our early history that approaches in importance the passing of the Declaration of Independence, it is the making of our Constitution, which was done eleven years later in the same building of the same city. In one sense the latter is of more interest to us all; the Declaration is now a historic document only, highly revered by all Americans, it is true, but of no present legal force; while the Constitution is still the supreme law of the land. The Declaration was called for by the people from all parts. Congress simply ratified their wishes in passing it. The Constitution cost a severe and prolonged struggle in the convention that framed it, and a more severe and more prolonged struggle in the various states before being adopted.

#### CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY AFTER THE REVOLUTION

Before proceeding to an account of the making of the Constitution, let us notice briefly the great need of such an instrument — the condition of the country before its adoption. The people had won their freedom in a long and bloody war with a great nation, but at the close of the war the country was in a sad plight — no money to pay the soldiers nor the foreign debt, and no means of raising money.

The Congress had assumed the burden of the war and had adopted measures for carrying it on, not from any legal authority, but by common consent. That the colonies stick together during the war was absolutely necessary to



success; but scarcely was the war over when the states began to feel their importance and to disregard the laws of Congress. That body could not enforce its own laws, it could only recommend; and any refractory state among the thirteen could openly and successfully defy its power. Now it is evident that no government can long exist if it has not power to enforce its own measures, and exactly in that condition do we find the United States for some years after the Revolution.

The great duty devolved upon the statesmen of that day to organize and consolidate these states into one firm and compact nation, and at the same time to retain the separate state governments in such a way that state laws and national laws would not conflict, but work in one grand harmony. This would secure both liberty and union. These two, Liberty and Union, are opposite tendencies of government, and they can exist together only when each yields part of its prestige to the other. Could these two, Liberty and Union, be so balanced in the same government as to secure the benefits of both?

It was a great problem. It was a problem that the ancient world labored for ages to solve, but labored in vain. Greece walked forth in the pride of her freedom, forgetting the need of Union, until she perished. Rome made the opposite mistake. Rome fostered and exalted Union for its strength until it became a tyrant and strangled the child Liberty. It was left for America to solve the problem whether Liberty and Union could be joined in perpetual wedlock, and the world turned with wondering eyes to the new born Republic of the West and awaited the decision whether a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people," could endure upon the earth.

Before the war the thirteen colonies had been joined

separately to England. When that bond was broken they found themselves thirteen separate republics, and not one of them strong enough to maintain its freedom alone. Yet there was much prejudice against uniting, as each was jealous of its own liberties, and the people feared that a general government, when formed, would become oppressive, as England had been.

Union had been a child of the Revolution, called forth in an emergency and for a special purpose, but was now no longer needful, especially since it was likely to encroach upon the other child still dearer to the American heart — Liberty. It was this feeling among the people that made it so difficult for the statesmen of that day to organize the government that we now enjoy. There had been adopted, it is true, a constitution known as the “Articles of Confederation;” but this was a rope of sand, and its best service was to teach the people their need of something better.

#### DEFECTS IN THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

At different times during the colonial period there had been efforts at union. The first of these, dating 1643, comprised four New England colonies, and was in force something over forty years. Another plan of union, drawn up by Dr. Franklin at the Albany Convention of 1754, was rejected by the colonies as too monarchical, and by the King as too democratic. There were efforts of less importance at various times, but we pass these by, and give our attention to the period before us.

In July, 1776, a few days after the Declaration of Independence was passed, a plan of government was proposed in Congress. It was debated for a short time and then laid on the table, where it rested for over a year, when it was again taken up and adopted. This instrument was called the

Articles of Confederation. It contained some of the elements of our present Constitution; but it provided for no president, no supreme court, and only one house of congress. This Congress had no power over commerce, no power to raise taxes except by the unanimous consent of the states, and it dealt with the states as units and not with the people as individuals. We can readily see how weak such a government must be. Let us notice more fully a few of these defects.

First: The operation of national law on a state and not on the citizen. The citizen had no direct relation to the government; all his political relations were to his state. If, for example, a man now violates a postal or revenue law, he is punished directly under United States laws, and the state in which the offence is committed has nothing to do with the matter. But under the Articles of Confederation, Congress had no such power; it could only call upon the state in which the offence was committed to punish the offender, and if the state neglected or refused to do so, there was no power to force it.

Second: There was no executive and no judiciary — no president to enforce the laws and no supreme court to interpret them. This was a serious defect indeed.

Third: They voted in Congress by states and not by individual members, each state having one vote, regardless of its size and importance. It required the votes of nine states to carry any important measure; and sometimes for months there were less than nine represented.

Fourth: Congress had no power to enforce any law whatever. The states, knowing this, had little regard for the laws of Congress. The Articles forbade any state to wage war or make a treaty; yet Georgia did both with the Creek Indians. The states were forbidden to keep troops in time

of peace; yet several of them did so. They were forbidden to enter into compacts; yet Virginia and Maryland did so concerning the navigation of the Potomac River; so also did Pennsylvania and New Jersey in setting the bounds to Delaware.<sup>1</sup> The Articles were constantly violated by the different states, but there was no power to prevent such violations.

Fifth: Congress had no power over commerce. This was a most glaring defect. Our agents were sent abroad to make treaties of commerce, and any treaty thus made could be set aside and annulled by any single state in the Union. The result was that foreign nations refused to treat with us and our foreign commerce was in a most deplorable condition.

There was no power to raise taxes, directly or indirectly, without the consent of every state. In 1782 Congress called upon the states to consent to a five per cent impost tariff, so as to raise money to pay the soldiers and the foreign creditors. Twelve of the states acceded to this, but one refused, little Rhode Island, and the project had to fall to the ground. The next year a five per cent tariff, limited to twenty-five years, was proposed. Twelve again agreed to this, including Rhode Island, but this time New York refused, and not a dollar could be raised.

The paper money known as continental money became so depreciated that it took one hundred and seventy-five dollars to purchase a bushel of corn. When anyone wished to express his utmost contempt for the value of anything, he would say, "Not worth a continental," an expression we still hear sometimes. Congress was penniless and powerless; and thoughtful people saw that something had to be done, and that soon.

<sup>1</sup> McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, Vol. I, p. 340.

## QUARRELS OF THE STATES

Besides the impotency of Congress, there was continuous jealousy among the states. The small states feared that the large ones would reduce them to the condition of subjects; and, in fact, Pennsylvania and New Jersey came near doing that very thing with Delaware. There were constant quarrels among the states. New York and New Hampshire both claimed the territory of Vermont and were about to fight over it. New York sent troops into Vermont and New Hampshire was about to do the same. Vermont was plucky and bristled up like a fighting terrier, and was about to fight them both, when Washington appeared on the scene as peacemaker. Vermont stuck to her claims, and, in 1791, after seeking admission into the Union for fifteen years, became the fourteenth state.

Another state quarrel was between New York, on the one side, and New Jersey and Connecticut on the other. New Jersey sold a great deal of poultry and dairy products to New York, and Connecticut sold firewood to the same state. Now New York laid a tariff on New Jersey poultry and Connecticut firewood. Then New Jersey retaliated by taxing New York's lighthouse on Sandy Hook, while Connecticut got even by boycotting New York.

But the most serious of the state quarrels was that between Pennsylvania and Connecticut over the Wyoming Valley. This quarrel came to blows and bloodshed. Connecticut claimed the Wyoming Valley by right of her charter and many of her people had settled there before the Revolution. Pennsylvania also claimed it and sent troops there to drive out the Connecticut people. After much strife and cruelty it was decided to arbitrate. Pennsylvania won, and Connecticut moved farther westward and took possession



of a slice of northern Ohio, then a territory, one hundred and twenty miles long and the width of the state of Connecticut. This was called the Western Reserve.

By these things we see that the Government was in an imbecile condition; something had to be done, or anarchy would prevail. Washington wrote a circular letter to the governors of all the states, urging a stronger government than the one existing. The people saw that there must be radical changes in the Government ere long, but what shape it would take no one knew. Some talked of a kingdom with the second son of George the Third as king. This was freely talked of in England, but found no footing in America. The people had had enough of George the Third. Washington was approached on the subject of becoming king, but he quickly put an end to the proposal. Then three confederate republics were talked of: one comprising New England; another, the Middle States; and a third, the Southern States. No one seemed to surmise that the boundless West was destined to become part of our public domain.

#### THE ANNAPOLIS CONVENTION

While the country was in this restless and unsettled condition, Virginia, the grand Old Dominion, came to the rescue and called a national convention to meet at Annapolis, Maryland, in September, 1786. Only a few states responded — none from New England, nor from the extreme South. There were only twelve delegates present, but these did something. They called another convention to meet at Philadelphia the following May. This proposed meeting at Philadelphia was destined to be the far-famed Constitutional Convention.

Would the states respond to the call? was the question of the hour. The people generally looked to Virginia to

take the lead, nor did they look in vain. Virginia was considered the greatest state in the Union, and she had called the convention at Annapolis. The election of delegates in this state was directed by a young man, James Madison, and he made a happy hit at the outstart by securing the selection of George Washington as one of the delegates. There was a reverence for Washington in every state that was little short of idolatry, and his name was a power in giving the convention tone over the whole country. There were but two men in America whose fame was world-wide, and Washington was one of them. Virginia next chose her governor, Edmund Randolph; but she did nothing better than when she chose Madison himself as one of the delegates. Patrick Henry would have been sent, but he refused to go. He was opposed to holding the convention; so also was Richard Henry Lee, who had moved the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

New Jersey soon followed in the election of delegates. Pennsylvania came next, and so on until twelve states were represented, one alone refusing. That one was Rhode Island; but Rhode Island might have been brought into line had not her greatest citizen, General Nathanael Greene, recently died of sunstroke. Congress, then sitting in New York, approved the convention after seven states had chosen delegates.

#### THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

The convention met in Philadelphia in May, 1787, and began its sittings on the twenty-fifth. There were fifty-five delegates in all, some of whom did not arrive for several weeks after the sessions began. Ten others who had been elected never attended.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Elliot, *Debates*, Vol. I, p. 63.

Very briefly let us notice the personnel of this convention. Thomas Jefferson, then minister to France, wrote that it was an assembly of demigods. It was, indeed, a notable gathering. Most of the members had filled high positions before, and many filled still higher positions afterward. Seven had been governors of states, and twenty-eight, members of Congress. Two afterward became Presidents of the United States, one, Vice President; and many others, cabinet officers and ministers abroad. Eight had signed the Declaration of Independence eleven years before, and a few had been members of the Stamp Act Congress of 1765.

The greatest American genius of that day was the oldest man in the convention, Benjamin Franklin, aged eighty-one. Of him and of George Washington nothing need be said, as every schoolboy knows their histories. There were in this convention Robert Morris, James Wilson, John Dickinson, Elbridge Gerry, and Roger Sherman — these have been referred to in a preceding chapter. There was Edmund Randolph, the popular young governor of Virginia, who, as a youth, at the outbreak of the Revolution, could not agree with his Tory father, ran away from home, joined the patriot army, and served through the war. He afterward became governor of his state and member of Washington's cabinet. We also find Gouverneur Morris, the author of our decimal system of money; John Rutledge, the brilliant orator of South Carolina; Rufus King, who was yet to spend many years in the forefront of political life; and Charles C. Pinckney, afterward a member of the famous mission to France, and twice candidate of his party for the presidency of the United States.

Two of the profoundest statesmen in the convention were young men, Madison and Hamilton. To Madison, perhaps, we owe more for making the Constitution what it is than to

any other man. Alexander Hamilton, afterward a member of Washington's cabinet, and the leader of his party as long as he lived, was a great lawyer and one of the greatest financiers this country has yet seen. He was born in the West Indies, came to New York when a boy, left college to join the army, showed military genius of a high order, entered public life at the close of the war, and fell at last, in the midst of his brilliant career, the victim of the duelist's bullet.<sup>1</sup>

The convention chose Washington as its president, closed its doors, and began its sittings for the summer. It was well that the sessions were kept secret from the public, for had the newspapers printed the wrangles and disputes that took place in that convention, the people would have been distracted. There were now all kinds of speculation as to what the convention would do. It had been elected for the purpose of amending the Articles of Confederation, but there was a general belief that it would go beyond its instructions. James Wilson related an anecdote of the poet Pope. A common expression of the poet, who was a man of frail body, was "God mend me!" A boy was one day assisting him across a ravine when the poet made use of his familiar phrase. "Mend *you*," said the lad; "it would be easier to make half a dozen new ones." So it would be easier to make half a dozen new constitutions than to mend the old one.<sup>2</sup>

The United States Government was compared to an old man who had thirteen sons. They had built a big house and all lived together for several years, when the sons grew weary of the paternal roof and each went out and built a hut for himself. Then trouble began: one had his corn stolen; another lost his sheep by wolves; another, his crops by

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. X.      <sup>2</sup> Bryce, *American Commonwealth*, Vol. I, p. 310.

flood, and so forth. At length twelve of them begged their father to take them back, and he gladly did so. But the thirteenth still held aloof, and at last went and hanged himself. That thirteenth was Rhode Island. Hard things were now said about Rhode Island. The five per cent impost had been defeated by Rhode Island, and as the little state now refused to take part in the convention, everything bad was blamed on it — the bankrupt treasury, the suffering of the soldiers, the poverty of the whole nation.<sup>1</sup> “Drop the state out of the Union,” it was said; “force it to pay its share of the Revolutionary debt, then drop it from the roll of states; or, better still, divide it between Massachusetts and Connecticut.”

#### THE THREE GREAT COMPROMISES

The Constitutional Convention sat with closed doors for four months. The work it produced was a great work: it brought order out of chaos; it converted a confederation of states into a federal government. Gladstone has said that “the American Constitution is the greatest work ever struck off at any one time by the mind and purpose of man.” From another great Englishman we quote: “The Constitution of the United States of America is much the most important political instrument of modern times.”

It is needless to give here a full account of the working of this convention. The great document which it produced is based on three compromises, and to these we give brief notice.

*First Compromise.*—Between the large and small states. When the convention had decided that the new Government should consist of three coördinate branches, an executive, a judicial, and a legislative, and that the national legislature

<sup>1</sup> McMaster, Vol. I, p. 393.



should consist of two houses, a dispute arose between the large and small states. The large states claimed that each state should be represented in Congress according to population; while the small states demanded that all be equally represented, regardless of size and importance, as under the Articles of Confederation. Long and fierce were the debates on this subject, each side avowing that it would not yield. Two or three times the convention was on the verge of breaking up, when at length they struck a compromise, called the Connecticut Compromise because introduced by the delegates from that state.<sup>1</sup> By this agreement it was decided that in the lower House of Congress the representation should be according to population, while in the upper House, or Senate, the states should be equally represented. This is the most permanent clause in the Constitution, for it provides that no state shall be deprived of its equal representation in the Senate *without its own consent*. Thus Delaware has the same voice in the Senate as New York, while in the House of Representatives the vote of New York is more than forty times greater than that of Delaware.

*Second Compromise.* — Between the free and slave states. Before it was fully decided whether to base the House of Representatives on population or wealth, another question arose: Are slaves population or wealth? The South claimed that the slaves were a part of the population, and should all be counted in the census that makes up the representation in Congress. The North contended that as slaves were bought and sold, they were merely property; and since they had no vote, they should not be counted in making up the census. Besides, it would give too much power to the men who owned large numbers of slaves.

Again there was fierce contention in the convention.

<sup>1</sup> George Bancroft, *History of the United States*, Vol. VI, p. 239.

Neither side would yield. Another compromise was the result — three-fifths of the slaves were to be counted in the census; so it was decided, and so it continued to the time of the Civil War.

*Third Compromise.*— Between agricultural and commercial states. When the census question was settled, the subject of further importation of negroes from Africa engaged the attention. A large majority in the convention opposed the foreign slave trade. "The traffic must be stopped," said they; "it is an inhuman business, this seizure of human beings and condemning them to lifelong bondage because they are black; it is contrary to morality, religion, and the Declaration of Independence, the very principles on which the Revolution was fought." Then two states protested in thunder-tones — South Carolina and Georgia. The African slave trade was necessary to their prosperity, they said. They raised rice and indigo in their boundless swamps where no white man could work, and even the black man could stand it but a few years, and the ranks had to be constantly refilled from Africa. They would not join the Union if the African slave trade was prohibited. They contended that it was not a matter of morality nor of religion; it was a matter of business; it was whether or not South Carolina and Georgia were wanted in the Union.

This was now very serious. The delegates from the other states felt morally bound to stop this traffic in human flesh and blood, but the attitude of these two states put a chill on their ardor. The outlook was grave: Rhode Island was not represented; the New York delegates had gone home in anger because they couldn't have their own way; Massachusetts was by no means certain. If now South Carolina and Georgia refused to take further part, it was plain that no Union could be formed.

Before this question was settled another arose, namely, Shall Congress or the states severally have control over commerce? The South said that by all means the states should manage their own commerce. It was an agricultural region; it desired a low tariff, or none at all, so as to buy goods cheaply from abroad. New England now protested. Its wealth was in shipping. The tariff should be the same in all the states. Congress should control it. Again there was a deadlock. Two great questions now lay before the convention: the control of commerce and the foreign slave trade. Again a compromise was reached. It was decided that Congress should control commerce, and that the African slave trade be left open — not forever, but for twenty-one years — until the year 1808. This was known as the third compromise of the Constitution.

The most important work of making the Constitution was now completed, and the summer was well-nigh spent. But there was much yet to do of minor importance; as, how to elect the President, for how long a term, and what powers should be given him? Many wanted the President elected by Congress, and seven years was the favorite length of term; but a term of four years was agreed upon and the election by an electoral college. Then the Supreme Court — how should the judges be appointed, what should be their powers, what powers should Congress have, and the like? All these things and many others were ably discussed, and finally decided as we have them now in our Constitution.

This great document being finished, the convention ended its sittings on the seventeenth of September. Few of the members were satisfied with it; each one thought it would have been a little better had he written it himself. Franklin advised that all the members sign it, that each one yield his own judgment to that of the majority.

As the members were signing, Franklin, pointing to a picture on the back of the chair in which Washington sat, remarked, "In looking at that picture, I have often wondered during the summer whether it was a rising or a setting sun. Now I *know* it is a rising sun."

#### THE CONSTITUTION BEFORE THE PEOPLE

The ship *Constitution* had had a rough voyage thus far, but the storms were by no means over. It was decided that if nine states adopted it, the new Constitution would take effect and become the supreme law of the land; but here it was destined to encounter serious and almost fatal opposition. It was sent to Congress, still sitting in New York, but there was much opposition to it in that body, led by Richard Henry Lee. After debating the subject for eight days, however, Congress sent it to the states without recommendation for or against it.

Now for the first time the people arrayed themselves into two great political parties. Those desiring a strong government and favoring the Constitution, became known as the Federalists; those opposing it were called Anti-Federalists. The people were nearly equally divided, and the strife extended over nearly a year, and was very bitter.

Delaware won the honor of being the first state to adopt the new Constitution. This was in December. Pennsylvania followed in the same month, led by James Wilson. In that state almost half the people opposed the Constitution, and it was adopted only after a most severe struggle. New Jersey came next and Georgia fourth. Georgia was bounded on the west by hostile Indians, and on the south by troublesome Spaniards. A better government was therefore quite welcome to the people, who felt the need of a stronger defence.

The two greatest states, Virginia and Massachusetts, still held aloof. There was powerful opposition in both. The convention was in session in Massachusetts, and the feeling was that it would decide the fate of New England and perhaps of the Union. The eyes of all now turned toward Massachusetts. In addition to Elbridge Gerry, who had helped frame the Constitution and then refused to sign it, two of the foremost men in the state opposed it, or at least were lukewarm — Samuel Adams and John Hancock. But Adams was converted in a novel way. During the convention a mass meeting of laboring men, who favored the new Constitution, met at the Green Dragon Hotel, in Boston. They were great admirers of Samuel Adams, and they sent one of their number, Paul Revere, famous for his midnight ride of years before, to inform Mr. Adams that they desired him to favor the Constitution. "How many of you are there?" asked Adams. Revere, pointing upward, answered, "More than the stars in the sky." Mr. Adams was much moved; he was converted, and Massachusetts soon afterward ratified the Constitution. This was the sixth state. Connecticut had been the fifth. Maryland and South Carolina soon raised the number to eight, and but one more was now needed to put the new government into operation.

It was now June, 1788. The Virginian convention was in session. The state had waited nearly a year, and eight of her sisters had ratified. There was a great opposition in Virginia, led by Richard Henry Lee and Patrick Henry. But in spite of Henry's eloquence the state ratified on the twenty-fifth of June. The shout of triumph was thrilling, and it spread over the whole country.

"The ninth state, the ninth state," cried the people; "Virginia has ratified, there are now nine states, and the



Government is secure. Hurrah for the United States of America!" But Virginia was not the ninth state. New Hampshire had ratified four days before, though the news had not yet reached Virginia. New York joined the ranks in July. This made eleven. The other two states, North Carolina and Rhode Island, remained out of the Union until some time after the first President had been inaugurated.

Nearly all the states, on adopting the Constitution, proposed amendments aggregating more than a hundred. These were considered by Congress. The House boiled them down to seventeen, and the Senate reduced this number to twelve, when they were sent to the state legislatures, as the Constitution provides. The states ratified ten of them. The first ten amendments to our Constitution were therefore adopted before the close of the year 1791. The eleventh followed some years later, while John Adams was President, and the twelfth in 1804. This was the last amendment for sixty-one years, the next being that abolishing slavery at the close of the Civil War.

The adoption of our Constitution marks a great era in human history — it marks the birth of a nation destined to be the greatest of the earth. It created a federal government, a wonderful combination between the states and the nation — each supreme within its own sphere, neither encroaching upon the domain of the other. This marvellous machinery was set in motion by the adoption of our Federal Constitution.

It is a remarkable fact that our Constitution is now far more deeply imbedded in the great American heart than it was during the first half-century of our history. At first it was generally believed that the new government would not last half a century. As late as 1832, John Marshall, the

great Chief Justice, expressed a fear that the Union would not be permanent. Not until after the Civil War were the people fully convinced that our present form of government will probably endure for many generations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a more complete account of the framing of the Constitution, see Elson, *History of the United States*, Chapters XII and XIII.

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE INAUGURATION OF WASHINGTON

#### THE UNANIMOUS ELECTION

IN our own times it is not possible to foretell who will be the next President of the United States until the people have made their choice by the ballot. But in 1788, when the Constitution had been adopted by the requisite number of states and was soon to go into operation, there was no speculation as to who would be the first President. Everyone knew that the great chieftain who had led the Revolutionary armies to victory was the choice of the nation.

General Washington, having passed the meridian of life, had retired after the war to his home at Mount Vernon, hoping to spend the evening of his days undisturbed on his plantation. Most men in public life are ambitious to rise higher and higher; but it was not so with Washington. His great desire was to spend the rest of his life amid the rural attractions of his home on the banks of the Potomac. No one can doubt this who reads his diary and his private correspondence. But when the great man heard the call, not only of his personal and political friends, but of the whole people as with one voice, to become the Chief Magistrate, he felt it his solemn duty to heed and obey the call.

Congress had decided that the electors be chosen in each state on the first Wednesday in January, 1789; that they meet and choose a President and Vice President on the first Wednesday in February, and that the new government go into effect on the first Wednesday in March. This day

happened that year to be the fourth. A few years later the fourth of March was made the legal inauguration day by act of Congress. New York City had been chosen as the temporary capital of the new Government.

The fourth of March came, but the new Congress did not meet on that day; there was no quorum present. The President was not inaugurated; he had not yet arrived. In fact it was only by Congress that he could be officially informed of his election.. The new government had been ushered in on the fourth of March by the booming of cannon and the ringing of bells; but, owing to the bad roads, long distances, and the slow methods of travel, Congress had not a quorum until the first of April, when the lower House began its first session, the Senate not meeting till the sixth.

One of the first things Congress did was to count the electoral votes, when it was found that George Washington had received sixty-nine, the entire number, and John Adams thirty-four, each elector having voted for two men. The votes not cast for Adams were scattered among ten other men, John Jay standing next to him with nine votes. But ten states voted in this election. North Carolina and Rhode Island were not yet members of the Union, and New York had not voted, owing to a quarrel between the two houses of the legislature.

A messenger, Charles Thompson, long the secretary of the old Congress, was immediately despatched with the news of the election to Mount Vernon. He arrived there about the middle of April, and Washington immediately set out on his journey to New York. On the sixteenth he wrote in his diary:

About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and, with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express,

set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations.

#### THE TRIUMPHAL MARCH

Washington's journey to New York was one continuous ovation. It was like the triumphal march of a Roman conqueror. Men, women, and children of all ages thronged the highways to shout their glad welcomes, and show their love to this first citizen of the land. He preferred a quiet, unostentatious journey, but public feeling was too strong to be suppressed. In every city through which he passed there was great preparation for his reception, and large numbers of citizens and soldiers escorted him through their respective states. At Alexandria he was given a public dinner presided over by the mayor, whose happy address was answered by Washington in a few choice words showing the deepest emotion. He was received with high honors at Baltimore and Chester; but it was left for Philadelphia and Trenton to make the greatest display in doing homage to this civilian hero.

The people of Philadelphia had erected a triumphal arch at Grey's Ferry on the Schuylkill, near the entrance of the city. At Chester, fourteen miles below, Washington had been placed on a superb white horse. The procession started for the city and was augmented along the way until it became a multitude. He entered the city amid the shouts of the gathered thousands and the roaring of artillery. As he passed under the arch, a crown of laurel was let down upon his head by a boy who had been concealed for the purpose amid the laurel branches. The day was given to festivities, and at night there was a grand display of fire-works.

On the next day, April 21, a beautiful sunny day, Washington reached Trenton, and his reception here was the most



touching of them all. What memories must have rushed to his mind when he reached the banks of the Delaware, where, twelve years before, he had crossed on that dark winter night amid ice and snow to strike a telling blow at the enemy. The change since then had been marvelous. Then the darkness of the winter night only typified the darkness that seemed to be settling like a pall over the patriot cause; now the brightness of the day was typical of the exultant gladness of a free and united people.

The people of Trenton were prepared to receive the approaching chieftain. At the bridge across the little river that flows through the city was erected a triumphal arch, tastefully decorated with evergreen and flowers. In front of the arch in large gilt letters were the words: "The defender of the mothers will be the protector of the daughters." At this point a large number of women met Washington and his escort, and as he passed under the arch a number of school-girls, dressed in white and crowned with garlands, came forward singing an ode<sup>1</sup> and strewing his path with flowers. Washington was more deeply affected by this than at any other time during his journey. He said that the impression it made upon his heart could never be effaced.<sup>2</sup>

The procession was two days crossing New Jersey to Elizabethtown Point, where they were met by a reception committee from both Houses of Congress. Here a fine

<sup>1</sup> The ode was composed for the occasion and is as follows:

Welcome, mighty Chief, once more,  
Welcome to this grateful shore;  
Now no mercenary foe  
Aims again the fatal blow.

Virgins fair and matrons grave,  
Those thy conquering arm did save,  
Build for thee triumphal bowers;  
Strew the hero's way with flowers.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, *Life of Washington*, Vol. V, p. 159.

barge, built for the occasion, was waiting to take the President-elect to the New York harbor. It was manned by thirteen pilots in white uniform, and was accompanied by many other vessels highly decorated and bearing many distinguished citizens. These formed a nautical procession and swept up the beautiful bay, cheered on by instrumental music and by the firing of salutes from the ships lying at anchor along the harbor.<sup>1</sup>

#### NEW YORK'S WELCOME

It was Thursday, April the twenty-third, 1789. New York City had donned its holiday dress. Flags were floating over the principal buildings, bells were ringing, and the people were in a flutter of excitement. Soldiers in bright uniform stood along the sidewalks, mounted aids galloped to and fro amid the surging crowd, while bands of music enlivened the scene. The bay was full of vessels with fluttering flags and streaming pennants. The crowd along the Battery was dense, and, as the people stood gazing down the bay, the barge in which Washington had embarked hove in sight, when the boom of cannon from the anchored vessels announced the fact, and was answered by thirteen guns from the city. The barge approached and from it stepped Washington, — tall and stalwart, with a proud, soldier-like step, but with a serious, thoughtful countenance. Here he was met by Governor George Clinton, and escorted through the streets amid prolonged cheering on all sides.<sup>2</sup>

The inauguration was to take place at Federal Hall (now the New York Subtreasury) corner Broad and Wall streets. Vice President Adams had been sworn into office before

<sup>1</sup> Irving, *Life of Washington*, Vol. IV, p. 565.

<sup>2</sup> A good brief account of Washington's reception in New York is given by Schouler, *History of the United States*, Vol. I, p. 150.

Washington reached the city; but a week was yet to elapse before the latter was to be inducted into his position, owing to the repairing of the building still in progress.

At length the day came — April 30, 1789. At nine o'clock religious services were held in all the churches in the city. Before noon the streets about Federal Hall were packed with a solid mass of people, the windows of the surrounding buildings were filled with eager faces, and the roofs were covered with anxious sight-seers.

A few minutes after twelve o'clock, Washington, accompanied by John Adams and Chancellor Livingston and followed by both Houses of Congress, stepped forth on the balcony in the presence of the vast assemblage of people. The shout of welcome that rose seemed to pour forth the whole heart of the nation. Washington placed his hand upon his heart and bowed again and again to the cheering multitude. He then sank back into an armchair, and the crowd, seeming to understand that he was overcome with emotion, was instantly hushed into silence. He soon rose again and stepped forward between Adams and Livingston, while in the rear stood Alexander Hamilton, Roger Sherman, Baron Steuben, and two Revolutionary generals, Knox and St. Clair.

The secretary of the Senate stood by with an open Bible on which Washington laid his hand while Chancellor Livingston pronounced the oath of office. At its conclusion Washington replied in solemn, stifled words: "I swear — so help me God." He then reverently bowed, and kissed the Bible.

Livingston now stepped forward, waved his hand to the people, and shouted:

"Long live George Washington, President of the United States."

The next moment a flag was displayed on the cupola of the hall, and this was the signal for the discharge of artillery on the Battery. Bells were rung all over the city, and the shout that rose from the assembled crowd spread from street to street until the whole city was a roaring, seething mass of humanity.

Soon afterward, the newly installed President retired within the hall and read his inaugural address. His voice was low and tremulous, as one of his hearers wrote, and his countenance grave almost to sadness, showing his deep sense of responsibility.

Thus was ushered into office the first President of the United States, amid the heartiest welcome that a grateful people could bestow. More than a century has passed since then, and the great Washington is still the American idol. From that time to this day no President has so completely won the universal homage of the American people.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ALIEN AND SEDITION LAWS

THE most famous legislation in our history after the adoption of the Constitution and before the Missouri Compromise was, perhaps, the Alien and Sedition Laws. The effect of these laws, though in force but a short time, was far reaching and important, as they had much to do in the overthrow of the political party that brought them into existence, and in establishing in power a party of opposite tendencies.

#### POLITICAL PARTIES ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Party lines in 1798 were more tensely drawn than they now are. Far less do our great political parties of to-day differ from each other than did the Federal and Republican parties of one hundred years ago. The Federal party, led by Alexander Hamilton, stood for a strong, centralized government. The Republican party, afterward called the Democratic party, founded and led by Thomas Jefferson, stood for State Rights and local self-government.

These two party leaders, Jefferson and Hamilton, were, beyond a doubt, the greatest American statesmen of this period. Both were as patriotic as it is possible to be, but they differed widely in their ideas of what the Government of the United States should be. They opposed each other at every point, and became personal enemies. Be it remembered that at this time the general policy of the Government had not been fully settled. Hamilton favored con-



struing the Constitution so as to make the Government very strong, and modelled after the English monarchy. He never fully trusted the people nor believed them capable of self-government. Jefferson was an extreme republican or democrat. He trusted the people implicitly, and used all his powers in furthering the one thing nearest his heart — local self-government. Both men were extremists, almost radicals. Hamilton lived to see the people rise and overthrow his party forever. Jefferson lived to see that a government carrying out his ideals was an impossibility; and after he became President he was forced to abandon, one by one, some of the very ideals on which his party had been founded.

But Hamilton and Jefferson each committed the serious mistake of misunderstanding the other. Hamilton believed that Jefferson was at the head of a party of fanatics who might rise at any time and take forcible possession of the Government, as the people of France had done in that country, and spread anarchy on all sides. Jefferson believed that Hamilton was at the head of a great conspiracy, the object of which was to merge the Republic into a monarchy. Both were in error. The Federal party did not aim nor wish to overthrow the Republic and substitute a monarchy; nor was there any danger of Jefferson's party effecting a revolution similar to the French Revolution.

When we bear in mind this misunderstanding between these two national parties, we can see more clearly why partisan hatred became so intense.

The Federal party did great service to the country during its twelve years' supremacy, but it was never a popular party. On the retirement of Washington, John Adams became President only after a most vigorous contest, and even then he had a majority of but three over Jefferson.

Had the Federal party been wise, it would now have seen the necessity of doing something to win the popular heart; but the party seemed bent on its own destruction. It proceeded to enact laws that were sure to drive away the very support that was necessary to its further lease of power. The most prominent of these were the far-famed Alien and Sedition Laws.

#### FOLLY OF THE FEDERAL PARTY

There was a moment in 1798 when the Federal party seemed to be really popular. It was at the time of the X. Y. Z. explosion, as it was called. There was serious trouble between this country and France. President Adams had sent three men, Elbridge Gerry, John Marshall, and Charles C. Pinckney, to treat with the French Government. They had a diplomatic correspondence with three Frenchmen representing their government in a semi-official way. These Frenchmen made demands upon the United States that could not be acceded to with honor, signing themselves X. Y. and Z.<sup>1</sup> It was at this time that Pinckney is said to have used the expression, "Millions for defence, but not one cent for tribute." This correspondence was called for by Congress. The President sent it in April, 1798, and the newspapers soon published it broadcast. Thus came the explosion.

The outburst of patriotism over the whole country was very enthusiastic. Party differences were lost sight of for the time, and the whole people seemed to join the universal shout. Patriotic songs were written, one of which, "Hail Columbia," written by Joseph Hopkinson for a Philadelphia theater, still survives. Now this outburst of popular

<sup>1</sup> More accurately, these letters were used by the American commissioners to conceal the names of the Frenchmen.

enthusiasm was purely non-partisan, yet the party in power, the party that had brought about the conditions that produced the excitement, might have reaped from it a rich harvest, had the necessary tact been used. But the Federal party was not tactful; it did not build for the future.

When the party found itself on the upper wave of public approbation, instead of strengthening itself for the future, it stooped to humble a few of its old enemies. It passed several obnoxious laws that tended to weaken it greatly. Not enough to estrange many owners of houses and of slaves by passing the House and Slave Tax Laws; not enough to offend a large portion of the foreign-born population by raising the Naturalization Law to fourteen years, — it went farther and enacted the famous, or, rather, infamous, Alien and Sedition Laws.

The Alien Law, enacted early in the summer of 1798, was two-fold. First, it enabled the President to apprehend and send out of the country any alien whom he might consider dangerous or disturbing to society. Second, the president was given power to apprehend any alien of any country which was at war with any other country. It was the former of these that caused a storm of protest. It had been aimed at Frenchmen in the country, and all French sympathizers denounced the law in unmeasured terms. It was opposed on the ground that it violated the Constitution in usurping power over men under the protection of the respective states in which they dwelled, and in denying them trial by jury. The law expired in two years.

The Sedition Law was also in two sections, one of which made it a serious offence to conspire to oppose any national law. This was opposed by no one. But the other, which made it a crime to print or publish any false, scandalous, or malicious matter against the Government of the United

States, the Senate or the House or the President, was most bitterly opposed. This, it was said, was unconstitutional on the ground that the Constitution guaranteed the right of freedom of speech and of the press, and also on the ground that it enlarged the jurisdiction of the Federal courts without legal warrant. The law was not more severe than the libel laws in some of the states, but it took the power from local judges and juries and put it into the hands of Federal officers. There were but two of the Federalist leaders who were wise enough to foresee that this law was likely to work injury to the Federal party. These were Alexander Hamilton and John Marshall; but their protests were not heeded. This law was aimed at some of the most radical Republican editors, who had been quite reckless in criticizing the President and his party.

Most vehemently did the Republican press denounce the Alien and Sedition Laws. "Freedom of speech and liberty of the press," cried the followers of Jefferson, "these are our rights, guaranteed by the Constitution. Who has the right to interfere with them?" This was their chief campaign cry two years later in the national contest, and it won Jefferson thousands of votes from the Federal party.

#### THE SEDITION LAW IN OPERATION

The Alien Law was never enforced. The Sedition Law, which was to expire with Adams's presidential term, was put into operation soon after its passage. The first victim was Matthew Lyon, a member of the lower House of Congress from Vermont. Lyon was an Irishman by birth, had been brought to this country as a redemptioner when a boy, had served in the War of the Revolution, and was now sent to Congress from the state of his adoption. He was an impetuous Republican; he despised all pomp and all

monarchical tendency, and became an object of extreme dislike to the Federalists.

Lyon figured in the first physical contest on the floor of the House. While he was speaking one day, Roger Griswold, one of the Federal leaders who hated him, made an offensive remark in an undertone. Lyon was deeply insulted and instantly turned and spat in Griswold's face. The excitement became intense among the members, and a motion soon followed to expel Lyon from the House. The motion was lost by a strict party vote. The chagrin and rage of the Federalists was now at the boiling-point, and the trouble was not yet over.

A few days later Griswold came into the House with a heavy stick in his hand, and began beating Lyon with it while the latter was sitting in his seat. Lyon now ran to the fireplace, seized the tongs, and the two statesmen engaged in a rough and tumble fight, rolling over the floor together several times amid the greatest excitement of the other members. Friends soon parted the combatants, and a motion was made to expel both from the House. But as both had equally offended, their friends decided at length to drop the whole matter.

But Matthew Lyon's troubles were only begun. Soon after the Sedition Law took effect, this Vermont statesman found himself arrested and called on to answer for a letter he had published in a Vermont paper criticizing the administration. About the severest thing in this letter was this: "Every consideration of the public welfare is swallowed up in a continual grasp for power, an unbounded thirst for ridiculous pomp, foolish adulation, and selfish avarice."

This language was no worse than that used by scores of editors and pamphleteers of both parties; but the Federalists despised this "wild Irishman," as they called him, and



improved this opportunity to wreak their vengeance on him. Matthew Lyon was seized, and, after a short trial, was fined one thousand dollars, and sent to prison for four months. A petition was soon sent to the President begging him to pardon Lyon; but, as the prisoner himself refused to ask for a pardon, President Adams declined to grant it.

There was one occurrence that brought joy to Lyon's heart in the midst of his misfortunes. He was triumphantly reëlected to Congress while still in prison. This proved that the people were still with him.

To pay his fine, his friends started a lottery. In those days lotteries were common. Public buildings, school-houses, bridges, court-houses, and the like were often built with money raised by lottery. Lyon's friends now took this means of relieving his distress; and the editor who called upon the people to support the lottery used such language as to land himself in prison under the same law!

Thus we have a sample of the practical working of the Sedition Law. About ten men, all editors, fell victims to the law. One man, Thomas Cooper, was imprisoned for saying that "the President was hardly in the infancy of political mistake;" another, named Frothingham, for accusing Hamilton of trying to purchase a Republican paper in the interest of Federalism.

It was plain that the law was not based on patriotism, nor was it passed for any good purpose. It was vindictive and born of partisan bitterness. But its effect was the opposite of that intended. It told heavily on the party that had fathered it.

#### THE KENTUCKY AND VIRGINIA RESOLUTIONS

Before the close of the year 1798 and while these obnoxious laws were still in force, the Kentucky legislature passed

a series of resolutions severely condemning the Alien and Sedition Laws. A few weeks later the legislature of Virginia adopted a series of very similar resolutions, but somewhat milder in tone. These expressions from these two legislative bodies attracted much attention and became famous in American history. It was not known at the time who wrote them; but it was found years afterward that Thomas Jefferson was the author of the Kentucky Resolutions, and James Madison of the Virginia Resolutions.

The Kentucky Resolutions were nine in number. They had been introduced into the legislature by George Nicholas, who had received them from Jefferson. Nicholas changed and modified them, somewhat. They defined the Union as a compact in which the states were a party, the Constitution being the written agreement defining the powers of the General Government. They pronounced for a strict construction of the Constitution, and claimed that the states as such had the right to judge of the constitutionality of national law, and that any infractions of the Constitution should be opposed by the states. The next year this legislature added a more severe resolution, declaring that the states were sovereign and independent, and that nullification was the rightful remedy for an unconstitutional law.

The Virginia Resolutions were eight in number. They declared, if Congress enacted laws that were unconstitutional, it was the right and duty of the states to interpose and arrest the progress of the evil. These resolutions, as well as those of Kentucky, all aimed directly or indirectly at the Alien and Sedition Laws, and their authors called upon the other states to express themselves on the subject. Several state legislatures answered them, but they all took the opposite ground, claiming that the states had no right to judge of the acts of the Federal Government.

The Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions opened a grave question that was not fully settled for more than half a century, and had to be decided at last by an appeal to the sword. That question was whether the United States of America was simply a compact, a confederation of independent states; or was it a federal government, a nation, with all the powers of sovereignty and self-preservation?

South Carolina made much of these resolutions, fathered by the great Jefferson, the Democratic idol, when adopting her Nullification Ordinance in 1832. The school of southern statesmen, led by Calhoun, based their doctrine of state sovereignty largely on the same ground. Even in 1861 the seceding states of the South, in arguing for the right of secession, freely quoted the resolutions of Jefferson. But to assert that the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions were the original cause of nullification and secession, would be to assert altogether too much. The conditions of the North and the South, on account of slavery, were so unlike that an ultimate conflict between them became inevitable.

Let it be remembered, finally, that these resolutions did not represent the sober, good sense of Thomas Jefferson; this is plainly shown by his public acts and later correspondence. They were written in time of great political excitement, and there is little doubt that the author (for Jefferson, and not Madison, was the real author) felt an honest fear that the Federal party was usurping too much power, and was establishing a dangerous precedent. This he wished to counteract, and he employed the means that promised to be most effective. No American statesman has been more patriotic than Jefferson, and the dismemberment of the Union for any cause was no part of his political creed.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FULTON AND THE STEAMBOAT

WE have spoken of the Revolution which took place in this country in the latter part of the eighteenth century. This was a political revolution, and its effect on the American people was far-reaching indeed, while its influence has been felt throughout the world. But there was another revolution that soon followed this, of the industrial world, and its effect on mankind has been even greater than that of the former. This second revolution was brought about, not by the marshalling of armies and the convulsion of nations, but silently, in the brain and the workshop of the men of genius. It came through the invention of the steam engine and its application to the navigation of rivers and seas, to railroads and factories. It is called the Industrial Revolution. It has revolutionized commerce and human intercourse, and has become a great factor in our modern civilization.

Strange to say, the means of travel had not improved for more than two thousand years; stranger still, in the quarter of a century following 1806 the commercial world was revolutionized by the subserving to man's use of a simple natural law, as old as creation. It was known to the ancients, that the expansion of water into steam exerted a powerful force, but it was left for modern times to apply that force to practical purposes, and the result has been marvelous.

The world, on receiving some benefaction, loves to choose out some particular person on whom to bestow its homage, often neglecting to award its gratitude to others equally

deserving. For the wonderful benefits of steam navigation the world has chosen to honor one name far above all others, and that is the name of *Robert Fulton*. In this case the honor is not misplaced; but it is also true that Fulton's achievements rested on the work of others, without which he could not have succeeded.

#### FULTON'S PREDECESSORS

The steam-engine was invented by a Scotchman, James Watt, some thirty-five years before Fulton's success on the Hudson. But more strictly speaking, Watt simply improved and perfected the clumsy steam-engine of Newcomen, which had been in use for half a century.

The subject of steam navigation had been talked of for many years before Robert Fulton was born. The first known attempt to apply steam to navigation was by a man wholly unknown to fame, William Henry, a gunsmith of Lancaster,<sup>1</sup> Pennsylvania. Mr. Henry was the leading gunsmith of his province during the French and Indian War. In 1763 he made an engine from models he had seen in England, attached it to a boat with paddles, and experimented on the Conestoga Creek near Lancaster. His attempt was not successful, but it is believed that he was first to originate the idea of the steamboat.

In 1786 James Rumsey was experimenting on the Potomac River with a steamboat of his own construction. His plan was to force a stream of water backward and thus propel the boat forward. General Washington saw the working of Rumsey's boat, and stated in a letter that he considered the discovery one of vast importance.

One more of these predecessors, and the most important of all, we must notice — John Fitch. The life of John Fitch

<sup>1</sup> Thurston, *Robert Fulton*, p. 30.



was tragic and sad. He was an inventive genius of the first rank, but a more unfortunate man would be hard to name. He was the son of a Connecticut farmer. His father was a hard-hearted man. So Fitch's youth was passed with little pleasure. He was intensely desirous of acquiring knowledge; but his stern and niggardly father, though amply able to procure them, refused him the necessary books. On reaching manhood the son married a woman with such a bad temper that he could not live with her, and he became a wanderer in the earth.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time that Rumsey was experimenting on the Potomac, we find Fitch with a similar craft on the Delaware. At first he made a very small engine and applied it to a very small boat, and succeeded in running it up-stream at the rate of seven miles an hour. Then he built a boat forty-five feet long and placed in it a larger engine, and soon began to make regular trips from Philadelphia to Bordentown and Trenton. It carried passengers, and in all ran about two thousand miles, when its usefulness was over. This was in 1787 while the Constitutional Convention was sitting in Philadelphia. Among the thousands who watched the experiment were Franklin and Washington. The curiosity of the public had been gratified; and, as the boat did not pay, the people refused to take further interest in it, believing the whole scheme impracticable.

Not so with Fitch. His soul was on fire with the scheme; he foresaw steam navigation to the uttermost parts of the sea, and he fully believed that the time had come for the new movement to begin. He also believed in himself; he believed that he was capable of carrying out his schemes, and no one at this day doubts that he was right. But he was penniless, the clothes on his back were turning to rags. Yet

<sup>1</sup> Parton, *People's Biography*, p. 146 ff.

he did not care about that. He wanted money to build another boat, but the public had lost interest in his projects. In vain did he appeal to Congress for assistance, in vain did he try to enlist the aid of wealthy men. At last genius surrendered, defeated for want of material aid. Poor John Fitch gave up his hopes with a broken heart. He wandered to the West and settled on a little farm in the wilderness of Kentucky, where he died, some years later, by his own hand. Had he received the needed assistance, there is little doubt that the name of John Fitch would hold the place to-day that is held by that of Robert Fulton

#### EARLY LIFE OF ROBERT FULTON

While John Fitch was building his boat on the Delaware, there was a young artist, aged twenty years, living at Second and Walnut streets, Philadelphia. He was a keen observer of what Fitch was doing. His name was Robert Fulton. He was of Irish descent, born on a farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1765. At the early age of three years he was left fatherless; and his mother was poor. Robert was sent to school, where he made fair progress; but his thoughts were more taken with the workshops of Lancaster, to which city the family had moved. He began his career of invention at an early age. When ten years old he made lead-pencils, which were pronounced almost as good as the best made at that time. At the age of thirteen he invented a sky-rocket, and at fourteen an air-gun. Congress had a gun-shop at Lancaster during the Revolution, and young Fulton frequented the place until, while still a child, he became an expert gunsmith.

Robert Fulton had also a natural talent for painting, and at the age of seventeen he went to Philadelphia, determined to become an artist. Here he remained for four years, and

not only became an excellent artist, but earned money enough to return at the age of twenty-one, and purchase for his mother a small farm. This done, the ambitious youth sailed for Europe to seek his fortune in the great world.

#### FULTON IN FOREIGN LANDS

He went to London and sought the home of Benjamin West, the great American artist then residing in that city. West had been born in the same state with Fulton, Pennsylvania; their fathers had been old friends; and now the world-famous artist opened wide his door to the aspiring boy from his own land. Fulton became a pupil of West and resided in his house for several years.

But while Robert Fulton was a successful artist, he was not a great artist, and none knew it better than himself. His mind reverted to the inventions and aspirations of his childhood, and at length he decided to give up painting and become a civil engineer and an inventor. He remained several years longer in England and while there invented a machine for sawing marble and another for spinning flax and still another for making ropes. He next invented a mechanical power-shovel which was used in England for many years. He was also the originator of the submarine torpedo used for destroying vessels of war. Among his intimate acquaintances were many of the leading men in England. He was the author of several books on various mechanical subjects. During all this period his mind was full of steam navigation. The papers of Fitch had fallen into his hands, and he studied them with the utmost care.

In 1802 he went to France, and in Paris he met a friend who proved to be the benefactor of his life. It was Robert R. Livingston, of New York, the man who had pronounced the oath of office to President Washington, and who was now

minister to France. Livingston had also been thinking much of navigation by steam. He had not genius, it is true; but he had something else almost equally necessary — he had money. In a short time a compact was made between Livingston and Fulton, and their aim was to navigate the Seine River by steam, the former furnishing the money, the latter the brains.

Fulton soon had his boat ready, sixty-six feet in length, and to this an engine was adapted. The time was at hand for making the trial trip. Fulton had spent a sleepless night. When he arose in the morning a messenger from the boat, with despair in his face, rushed into his room, and exclaimed:

“Oh, sir, the boat has broken to pieces and gone to the bottom!”

Fulton was overwhelmed with grief. Hastening to the river, he instantly began the task of raising the vessel with his own hands, and he kept at it, without food or rest, for twenty-four hours. From the injury to his health, occasioned by this exertion, he never fully recovered.

In a few weeks the vessel had been raised and rebuilt, and at the trial trip in July, 1803, a vast crowd of people stood on the banks of the river and shouted their acclamations of approval. But Fulton saw that the vessel was imperfect, and that a new engine must be procured. As Chancellor Livingston was now about to sail for America, it was decided that the next experiment be made on the Hudson River.

#### THE “CLERMONT” ON THE HUDSON

Robert Fulton was not the inventor of the steamboat, as is commonly supposed; but he was the first to put it into practical use. The poet Lowell has said:

Though old the thought and oft expressed,  
'Tis his at last who says it best.

This is true in mechanics as well as in poetry. Fulton adopted and improved on the ideas of William Henry, of James Rumsey, of John Fitch, and others, and where they had failed he succeeded. The world applauds success, but it seldom forgives the one who fails. Fulton has received the honor that he deserved, while the others, scarcely less deserving, have been forgotten by the great public.

Again, the highest peak in a mountain system is the noted one; others almost as lofty are scarcely noticed. So with the inventors of the steamboat. At the time Fulton was experimenting with steam navigation there were movements of the same kind in various parts of the world, independent of his. The scientific world at that moment was absorbed with the one great subject — navigation by steam. Fulton had great advantages; he had a monopoly of the Hudson River, he had Livingston as his partner. Perhaps he was the greatest genius of them all; at least he succeeded first; thus he gained public applause, and became the popular hero. His fame is now world-wide, and perhaps will never diminish.

But who besides specialists and historians has heard of John Stephens? He was an inventive genius of great skill. Having received his ideas of steam navigation from Fitch, he labored for years to construct a steamboat. He succeeded at last in 1807 — just *after* Fulton had won the popular heart. In a few years he had steamboats plying on the Delaware and Connecticut rivers. Had it not been for Fulton, Stephens would probably to-day be honored as the inventor of the steamboat.

Let us return to our subject. Fulton and Livingston determined to make their next attempt in America. They ordered a steam engine in England, without revealing the object for which it was intended. Fulton went to England to oversee its construction, which took nearly three years.



It reached New York in 1806, and its owners soon had a boat one hundred and thirty-three feet long, of one hundred and sixty tons. The steam-power was applied by means of a paddle-wheel. Fitch had employed an endless chain with paddles attached, and Stephens used a screw-propeller.

Fulton named his boat the *Clermont*, after Livingston's country-seat on the Hudson. The trial trip was made in August, 1807. A vast crowd of people stood on the banks of the river to witness the experiment, few believing it would be successful. The moment came, and the *Clermont* moved out into the river, running against the current at the rate of four miles an hour.

The trip to Albany, one hundred and fifty miles, was covered in thirty-two hours, an average of nearly five miles an hour, while the return trip took but thirty hours.

The boat was described as "a monster moving on the waters, defying wind and tide, breathing flames and smoke." The fuel used was dry pine, and the flames rose above the smoke-pipe. It was said that in some of the vessels met by the *Clermont*, "the crews shrank beneath the decks from the terrific sight and let their vessels run ashore; while others prostrated themselves and besought Providence to protect them from the horrible monster which was marching on the tides, and lighting its path by the fires which it vomited."

The great question was now settled; navigation by steam was an assured fact. A New York paper made the statement that there would soon be steamboats on the Mississippi, and it was believed that they would make two miles an hour against its strong current. What would the editor have thought had he foreseen that long before the century's close the sea would be covered with steamships, some of more than forty thousand tons burden, "ocean greyhounds," that would cross the Atlantic in less than six days?

After the *Clermont* had made her successful trial trip, she was scheduled to make regular trips twice a week from New York City to Albany, the charge for a passenger being seven dollars each way. She was usually loaded with passengers, and the owners found the business a paying one from the start. During the winter the *Clermont* was enlarged and repaired, and two other steamboats, the *Raritan* and the *Car of Neptune*, were added to the service the following year. Within seven years Fulton had twelve steamboats, all built under his directions, plying the waters around New York. The first steamboat on the Ohio River was built at Pittsburgh by Nicholas J. Roosevelt in 1811.

Robert Fulton was the hero of the hour. He was a tall, handsome man, rather slenderly built, graceful and refined. He had risen socially as well as otherwise; he had married a niece of Mr. Livingston, and his associates were the leading men of Europe and America. His name was on every tongue, but he was very modest and gave his whole energy to the further improvement of the use of steam power. But he was not long left to enjoy his triumph. Death claimed him while in the midst of his useful life. In January, 1815, he was called to Trenton to testify in a court trial. On his return he crossed the Hudson in an open boat amid heavy floating ice. He caught a severe cold which resulted in a serious illness. When only partially recovered he went to the Brooklyn navy-yard to oversee the building of a vessel, and was exposed to the cold for several hours. He suffered a relapse, and on February 24 he died, aged fifty years. Seldom in our history has the death of a private citizen caused such universal mourning as did that of Robert Fulton. But his work was done. He had risen from the ranks of the lowly and achieved the highest success. He did a great service for mankind, and the glory of his fame will not fade.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION<sup>1</sup>

AT the beginning of the nineteenth century the Great West, from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, was a vast, unbroken wilderness. Before such a region can be claimed for civilization — even before the pioneer makes his home in the forest — must come the explorer. The most notable exploring expedition since De Soto and Marquette was that of Lewis and Clark in the great Northwest.

The father of this expedition was Thomas Jefferson. As early as 1792 he proposed to the American Philosophical Society that an expedition be sent up the Missouri River to cross the "Stony Mountains," as the Rocky Mountains were then called, and to follow the nearest river to the Pacific. When he became President in 1801, his pet project was still on his mind, and this desire was greatly intensified two years later by the Louisiana Purchase, which added a vast territory of unknown bounds to the public domain.

There was a young man in Jefferson's employ as private secretary, named Meriwether Lewis, who was very anxious to lead the proposed exploring party. He had been a captain in the army, and Jefferson, knowing him to be a man of a daring, adventurous spirit, of truthfulness and discretion, appointed him to the command. Lewis was elated with his appointment; he hastened to Philadelphia, and spent several months in the study of geography, botany, and astronomy,

<sup>1</sup> For the material of this chapter I have drawn largely on the account of H. H. Bancroft, *History of the Pacific States*, Vol. X.

that he might be able to do the work before him the more intelligently.

The instructions were written in Jefferson's own hand, and were signed in June, 1803. By them Lewis was directed to provide himself with arms and ammunition, with tents, boats, provisions, and medicines, and also with many articles for presents and barter with the Indians. Lewis chose Captain William Clark of the United States Army as second in command, and proceeded to Pittsburgh in July, where part of his outfit was to be provided. Later in the summer he went down the Ohio and up the Mississippi, and encamped for the winter with his company on the eastern bank of that river, opposite the mouth of the Missouri. The winter was spent in drilling the men, and in making preparation for the ascent of the Missouri in the early spring.

The expedition was composed of twenty-eight men, half of whom were soldiers; nine were young Kentuckians, two Frenchmen, one was a hunter, one an interpreter, and the remaining one a negro servant of Captain Clark. In the company we find the famous scout and Indian fighter, Lewis Wetzel. In all our history of Indian warfare Lewis Wetzel stands without a superior in daring and reckless bravery. Escaping at the age of thirteen from a band of Indians who had murdered his father, he took a solemn oath that he would kill every Indian that it came in his power to kill as long as he should live — and he kept his word. He could follow a trail with the keenness of a blood-hound; he could load his rifle while running at his highest speed; and woe to the dusky warrior that came within range of his deadly aim! Captain Clark, knowing of Wetzel's unerring aim and his wonderful knowledge of the woods, and believing that he would make a valuable member of the

party, persuaded him to join it. But Wetzel was accustomed to the wild freedom of the wilderness; he disliked the military discipline of an organized expedition; and, after accompanying them for three months, suddenly left them and returned to his native haunts on the Ohio.

#### ASCENDING THE MISSOURI

The party embarked in three boats on May 14, 1804, and ascended the Missouri at the rate of twelve to fifteen miles per day. Their largest boat was fifty-five feet long, and carried one sail and twenty-two oars. They had gone but eight days when they made their first trade with Indians — two quarts of whiskey for four fine deer. The forests were full of game and the rivers abounded with fish, both of which they secured in abundance. After they had journeyed some weeks they frequently met with Indian tribes, most of whom were quite friendly.

One day in July, soon after they had passed the mouth of the Platte River, one of the party, while hunting in the forest, came upon three Indians dressing an elk. They belonged to the tribe of the Ottoes, and it was arranged that the tribe hold council with the explorers. The latter chose a bluff on the east bank of the river, where they pitched their tents and awaited the Indians. The view from this place was one of striking beauty. In the distance were seen groves of cottonwood and elm, rising here and there from the prairie, and the majestic river winding silently away among the hills.

The Indian chiefs were presented with medals and other trinkets. They seemed greatly pleased with their strange white visitors from the East. The council being held on a bluff of the river, the place was called Council Bluffs, a name retained by the flourishing city and railway center that



afterward grew up on the spot. Two weeks later they encamped at the mouth of a little river where now Sioux City, Iowa, is situated. One of their number, Mr. Floyd, had died, and they gave his name to the river. Here they held council with the Mahas tribe, and some miles farther up, with the Sioux. Similar councils were held with many other tribes. These Indians were highly pleased with the whiskey and trinkets received from the white men. But there was one tribe, the Ricaras, that refused to accept whiskey. Why, they asked, should they be offered drink which made fools of them?

The expedition had, by the last of October, penetrated far into the Northwest Territory; the weather was now growing cold, and the men determined to stop for the winter. They built several strong log houses, and found them quite comfortable. The blacksmith of the party put up a furnace, and made knife-blades and spearpoints, which were traded to the natives for corn. The Indians were greatly taken with the bellows; they thought it a marvelous thing indeed.

As spring approached, the party prepared to plunge still farther into the boundless wilderness. The large boat could not be taken farther, as the river was growing more rapid; it was therefore turned back and headed for St. Louis. An escort of several men, who had thus far accompanied the expedition, returned with the boat and took with them several boxes sent by Captain Lewis to President Jefferson. These boxes were filled with specimens of earth, minerals, native implements, and stuffed birds and animals. The two parties separated — the one for the haunts of civilization, the other for the unknown Rocky Mountain region — on the afternoon of April the seventh, 1805.

The expedition had now been a year on the way; but there were many weary miles yet to be traversed. They soon

passed the mouth of the Yellowstone, then the Milk River, which they so named because of the peculiar whiteness of the water, and on they pressed toward the Rocky Mountains. In this remote region they found wild animals in great abundance. The country literally swarmed with buffalo, wolves, bears, coyotes, prairie dogs, and many other animals. Captain Lewis was one day chased by a wounded white bear and narrowly escaped destruction.

On the twenty-sixth of May, Lewis ascended a hill and cast his eyes westward. He now saw for the first time the crest of the Rocky Mountains, far away in the western horizon. The lofty summits seemed to penetrate the skies and the captain was deeply moved with the magnificence of the scene. He wrote in his journal that he "had got the first glimpse of the great Rocky Mountains, the object of all our hopes and the reward of all our ambitions."

One day, as the men were walking over the plain, they heard an awful rumbling in the sky, and were soon overtaken by a hailstorm, the most terrific they had ever seen. All the men were knocked, bruised and bleeding, to the ground, Captain Clark narrowly escaping with his life.

On the thirteenth of June the party reached the Great Falls of the Missouri. They had heard the mighty roar for several hours; now they stood before one of the grandest spectacles of falling water in the world. The river descends the mountain side about three hundred and sixty feet in the course of sixteen miles. There are four different cataracts, the largest being a leap of eighty-seven feet over a perpendicular wall. Between the cataracts are rapids where the water leaps and rages as if possessed by evil spirits. Far above the mad, seething river rises a cloud of rainbow-tinted spray, which floats peacefully away over the forest until absorbed in the air by the sun.

## ON TO THE PACIFIC

On reaching the great falls the party were obliged to carry their canoes for eighteen miles, when they again made use of the river. After a journey of one hundred and forty-five miles from the falls they reached a place where the Missouri breaks through great mountain walls many hundred feet in height, and they called it the "Gates of the Rocky Mountains." They were still four hundred miles from the source of the river, and their journey continued.

Many interesting incidents took place as they journeyed along. One morning Captain Lewis awoke and found that a huge rattlesnake had coiled itself around the tree beneath which he had slept, where it kept watch over him but did him no harm. On one occasion the party was divided into two parts and came near losing each other owing to the impudence of a little beaver. One company led by Lewis came to the forks of a small river, and he left a letter placed on a pole for Clark, directing him to take the stream to the left. Along came the beaver and deliberately cut down the pole with his teeth, and carried it away, letter and all. Clark took the wrong branch, and it was several days before the parties were reunited.

The party had with them an Indian woman of the Shoshone tribe, who had been taken captive by another tribe about five years before. They called her the Bird Woman. Her Indian name was "Sakakawea." There is a beautiful statue of her at Portland, Oregon. Being informed through the interpreter who the white men were and whither going, she was induced to go with them in the hope of again finding her own people. Captain Lewis was pleased with this, as he hoped to make friends with the Shoshones by bringing back their lost one. While in advance of the rest one day

in August he saw, about two miles across the plain, a man on horseback, and by the aid of his glass he saw that it was an Indian warrior whom he believed to be a Shoshone. Lewis approached cautiously, but when within a few hundred yards the savage wheeled his horse and soon vanished in the wilderness.

For some days they searched for these Indians, their object being to secure guides and horses; for the faithful Missouri had at last dwindled to a rivulet and could guide them and bear them no longer. Several times they sighted Indians, but each time they ran like frightened deer. After several days' search they came suddenly upon two women, one of whom escaped, but the other was captured. She stood expecting instant death; but Lewis soon convinced her that there was nothing to fear, and persuaded her to lead them to her tribe. While on the way they were met by sixty armed warriors, coming to her rescue; but when she convinced them of the character of the newcomers, and when they beheld the other woman who had been stolen from them several years before, now brought back in safety by the strangers, their hostility was changed to the wildest demonstrations of joy. They leaped from their horses and embraced the white men, besmearing the clothes and faces of the latter with paint and grease. It is needless to say that our party had no further trouble securing guides and horses.

The expedition had now reached the water-shed which divides the vast basin of the Mississippi Valley from the Pacific Slope; and one can imagine a tiny drop of water falling from the clouds and being divided by the upturned edge of a leaf, the one half finding its way to the Atlantic Ocean by way of the Missouri, the Mississippi, and the Gulf of Mexico, the other flowing into the Pacific by way of the

Columbia River. Here was a great divide, the very summit of the Rocky Mountain system, the birthplace of mighty rivers. From this point our party must traverse the rugged mountains on horseback and on foot, leaving behind their canoes, until they reached the head waters of the Columbia, that noble river of the Pacific Slope, which had been partially explored thirteen years before by Captain Grey, and to which he had given the name of his ship — the *Columbia*.

We shall not attempt to trace their further course in detail, as their experience was similar to that already given. The party discovered many rivers and creeks to which they gave names. They evidently had no poet in the company, as the names they conferred are peculiarly devoid of euphonic beauty. After exhausting their vocabulary, they conferred the names of the President and his cabinet on the Rivers. We find the Jefferson, the Madison, the Gallatin, and the Dearborn rivers. Then they used the names of the men of their own company till all were exhausted. The Lewis River, the Clark River, the John Day River, are found among them. Even the negro servant, York, was honored by having a river called by his name. Sometimes they gave such pedantic names as Philosophy, Philanthropy, and Independence to the rivers. When they discovered one river, a large bear was standing on the bank, and they called it Bear River. One day they encamped on a bank of a stream where game was scarce, and they killed a colt for food; they called it the Coltkilled River. Some of these names have been changed, but many are still retained.

On the twenty-eighth of September our explorers found themselves in the presence of Mount Hood, rising to the clouds in all its grandeur and magnificence. On they marched, passing dangerous shoals and rapids in the upper Columbia, and suffering many hardships. But they were



amply repaid with many romantic scenes — cascades of marvelous beauty, snow-capped mountain ridges skirted at the base with gigantic forests, with here and there an open space of the most luxuriant vegetation, now adorned with the richest autumnal hues.

On the morning of November 7, 1806, after a journey of a year and a half through the unbroken wilderness, they first saw the blue line in the western horizon that told them that the goal of their wanderings was at hand. It was the Pacific Ocean. At last they had reached that boundless watery plain upon which Balboa had gazed with a swelling soul, through which Magellan had ploughed with his hardy seamen until he had belted the globe.

#### THE RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES

The exploring party spent the winter in log cabins of their own construction, near the mouth of a river, and they called the place Fort Clatsop. During the winter they made several exploring expeditions and were visited by various Indian tribes. On March 23, 1807, they began their return journey. They ascended the Columbia River in canoes to its head waters, when they crossed the mountains on horses secured from the Indians whom they had seen the year before. Most of the tribes they found still friendly, while others were becoming suspicious of the white invaders of their forest home. The Walla Wallas were so cordial that the party, after remaining with them some days, found it difficult to get leave to depart. Later they encountered a tribe that was disposed to be treacherous, and Lewis was obliged to shoot an Indian to save his own life.

The return trip was covered more rapidly than the advance had been, especially after they reached the Missouri, on which they floated with the current. The expedition

reached St. Louis, September 23, 1807, having traversed nine thousand miles of unexplored wilderness in two and a half years. They had experienced but few accidents, and had lost but one man. Their journal was published a few years later, and it conveyed much important information concerning the great West. Congress made grants of land to each member of the party, besides a soldier's pay for the time spent.

Captain Lewis became governor of Louisiana Territory, and Clark a general of militia, afterward governor of Missouri. Two years later Lewis was attacked by a hereditary disease, and, in a temporary season of insanity, took his own life. Clark's negro servant, York, now took Lewis's name, and called himself Captain Lewis to the end of his life, dying in Virginia at the great age of ninety years.

#### AN INDIAN STORY

A member of the Lewis and Clark expedition named John Colter, while on the return trip, asked and was granted leave to remain in the wilderness as a hunter and trapper. He associated himself with a trapper named Potts, and the two were soon busy capturing fur-bearing animals. They were in the heart of the Blackfoot Indian country, and these savages were known to be hostile at the time.

One day as Colter and Potts were sitting in their canoe on the edge of a small stream, as Colter related the story, they heard, from behind a neighboring hill, the tramp of innumerable feet. At first they feared that it was Indians; then they thought it was a herd of buffalo. In a few minutes their worst fears were realized. Six hundred savage warriors swarmed around the hill, and the two trappers were unable to escape. Potts raised his rifle, shot down the foremost Indian, and his body was instantly pierced

by a score of arrows. The canoe floated away, bearing his dead body. Colter was taken captive.

The savages had no thought of sparing Colter's life, but they decided to toy with him, as a kitten toys with a mouse before killing it — but sometimes the mouse finds a hole and escapes. Colter was first stripped to the skin, not a shred of clothes being left on his body. He was then asked if he were a good runner, and he answered that he was not. The chief then took him about three hundred yards from the body of Indians, let him go, and said, "Now save your life, if you can."

At that instant the six hundred savages, with a terrible war-whoop, started in pursuit. Colter darted away with a speed that surprised himself as well as his pursuers. There was a plain before him six miles wide, bounded on the farther side by a river fringed with trees. Colter made for this stream, and the unearthly, demon-like yells of the on-rushing savages seemed to lend him wings. The plain was covered with prickly pears, and, being without moccasins, his feet were lacerated at every stride. He ran about three miles before looking back; then, glancing over his shoulder, he saw that all but a few were left far behind. One huge warrior, however, armed with a spear, was but two hundred yards away and gaining. Colter doubled the effort, and so great was his exertion that the blood gushed from his nostrils and flowed down over his breast. When within a mile of the river, he glanced back again and saw that his pursuer was but few paces away, and almost in the act of throwing his spear.

Colter, moved by a sudden impulse, stopped and faced the savage, spreading out his arms, and thus stood in the form of a cross. The Indian was so surprised at this unexpected movement and at the bloody appearance of the

white man's body, that he stumbled and fell to the ground. Colter ran back, seized the spear, ran it through his antagonist's body, pinning him to the earth, and renewed his flight.

The pursuing savages halted a few seconds over the dead body of their comrade, thus giving Colter an increased advantage. Now they again resumed the pursuit with yells more fiendish than before. But Colter was nearing the river, and was soon hidden by the trees. The next moment he plunged beneath the waves. In the middle of the river, lodged against an island, was a large raft of driftwood. Beneath this our hero dived, and stuck his head up between two logs covered with smaller timbers and brush. The Indians came up and searched for several hours, but failed to find him. Again and again he could see them walking above him over the driftwood. He was terribly afraid they would set fire to it, but they did not.

At nightfall the savages left, and Colter swam out and was soon speeding through the forest. After traveling for seven days, utterly unclothed, and with nothing to eat but roots, he reached a trading-post on the Big Horn River. It was several months before he fully recovered from his terrible experience.

## CHAPTER X

### CONSPIRACY OF AARON BURR

THE world is inclined to go to extremes in placing its stamp of value on the most conspicuous public characters. The people must have their hero, their type of all perfection; they must also have their type of all villainy. The drama must have its hero and its villain, and if either falls below perfection in his rôle, the imagination supplies the deficiency.

Some of the greatest characters in history were not so great nor so perfect in real life as posterity has made them; and it is certain that some of the villains of history were not so monstrous as they have been pictured.

#### AARON BURR

This chapter is not intended to be a defence of the character with whom it deals, but the author wishes to state his belief at the outstart that Aaron Burr has been judged too severely by the American people; that he was not so deep-dyed a villain as is generally supposed. It is true that he slew the great Hamilton in a duel; but duels were common in those days, and he who accepted a challenge was scarcely less blamable than he who gave it. It is true, or is supposed to be true, that Burr aimed to sever the Union and to set up a western empire with himself at the head. But let it be remembered that in those days there was a general belief that the East and West would eventually become separate nations; that so unlike were their interests, and so great their



distance apart, as to render their continuance in the same household impossible; and that it is still believed that but for the railway and the telegraph, the telephone and the radio, which have brought us so near together as a people, the ultimate separation of the East and the West would have been inevitable.

Nevertheless, Burr was not a good character; his ambition was not that of the patriot, but of the self-seeker; his killing of Hamilton was little short of murder, as he knew that his skill with the pistol far exceeded that of his antagonist, and he was fully determined to end the career of the latter. But he had his redeeming traits. He was a great lover of children; his perennial exuberance of spirits under the most crushing trials excites our admiration; his devotion to his daughter was strangely beautiful.

Aaron Burr was a descendant of the great New England divine of colonial days, Jonathan Edwards. Scarcely more than a boy at the outbreak of the Revolution, he flung himself into the midst of the fray and proved to be one of the bravest of the brave. He afterward entered the legal profession and became one of the keenest and most successful lawyers in America. He entered politics and rose until he became a senator, then Vice President of the United States. His wife had died and left him a little daughter named Theodosia, a beautiful girl of the rarest mental gifts, who, while yet a child, presided over her father's luxuriant home with the grace of a princess. The father adored his charming daughter, and lavished upon her every luxury that wealth could bestow; but she did not become a spoiled child; her good sense was of the highest grade, and her devotion to her father was admirable.

But an evil day came, and the happiness of the family became forever blighted. The misfortune began with the

death of Hamilton. It had been coming, it is true, for some time before. Hamilton was but one of the powerful politicians who had combined to break the political fortunes, in New York and in the nation, of Aaron Burr. They succeeded, and in the spring of 1804 Burr found himself politically and financially ruined.

Burr was a vindictive man. He brooded over his downfall. He thought Hamilton the chief cause of it, and determined to rid himself of his great rival. He challenged him to a duel. The false code of honor of that day was such that one could not refuse such a challenge without being branded as a coward, and Hamilton had not the moral courage to defy public opinion and refuse to fight a duel. He accepted the challenge. They met at Weehawken, on the New Jersey shore of the Hudson, on July 11, 1804. Hamilton fell at the first fire, mortally wounded. In a few hours he was dead. Burr had *legally* slain his enemy. He may have experienced a momentary thrill of joy at the result. The truth may not at that moment have entered his brain that his fatal bullet had added a luster for all time to the name of his fallen victim, and had covered his own with indelible dishonor.

If ever there was a man who received due punishment in this life for his wrong doing, it was Aaron Burr. From this day forth his every project was marked with failure. He lived to be old, and through all his subsequent years, misfortune pursued him, like the Nemesis of evil, with unrelenting severity.

Scarcely had the breath left Hamilton's body, when public feeling in New York, regardless of party, was roused against his slayer. Burr, to escape the popular indignation, quietly left the city for Philadelphia; but here he found the same state of feeling against him, and he fled to the South, where

he remained for several months. When the excitement had somewhat abated, he returned northward, and spent the winter in Washington and Philadelphia; but the public feeling was still such that he thought best not to remain, and he decided on making a tour of the West.

He left Philadelphia in April, 1805; in nineteen days he had reached Pittsburgh, and was soon floating down the Ohio. The Ohio is one of the most beautiful of rivers. For hundreds of miles it coils itself among the hills, which often rise from the water's edge in rocky steeps skirted along the base and crowned at the top with primeval forest. Onward the little party proceeded until they reached Marietta, that quaint old town that had been founded seventeen years before by Rufus Putnam, the "Father of Ohio," and named in honor of the unfortunate queen of France. Here they alighted and inspected those strange mounds, the relics of a vanishing race, at the mouth of the Muskingum.

A few miles below Marietta there is an island in the river that was soon to become famous, and was to be known henceforth as the Blennerhassett Island. It lies low in the river, is about three miles long, and quite narrow. On this island Harman Blennerhassett, an eccentric, romantic Irishman, with an equally romantic wife, had made his home. He had been a barrister in his own country, had inherited a snug fortune, and brought it, with his wife, to America. Their thirst for the novel and the romantic had led them to penetrate the western wilderness, and to locate on this island, where they built a curious house, modeled after some of the ancient structures of the Old World. Here they lived in apparent contentment for several years. Burr, having heard of the eccentric foreigner, landed at Blennerhassett Island and made himself acquainted with the family. He then descended the river to the Falls of the Ohio, where

Louisville now stands. At this point he left the river, and made an overland journey through the wilderness to Nashville. A traveling showman had lately been at Nashville, and had exhibited a wax figure of Burr "as he appeared when he slew the leviathan of Federalism under the heights of Weehawken."<sup>1</sup>

#### THE GREAT CONSPIRACY

Burr's plans had now taken shape in his own mind. There was continuous friction between the Americans and Spaniards in the Southwest, and Burr gave out that he intended to conduct a military expedition against Mexico, which then belonged to Spain. But an inner circle knew that his designs were still deeper, that his aim was to raise a revolt in the Mississippi Valley, to sever the Valley from the Union, and to establish an independent nation.

Burr went down the Cumberland from Nashville. On reaching the mouth of the Ohio, he met the man who was to be his confederate, and afterward his betrayer — General James Wilkinson. Wilkinson was commander of the armies of the United States and governor of Louisiana at the time. He was a man of ambition no less sordid than that of Burr. The two had long been acquainted; they had fought together under the walls of Quebec in the Revolution, and had corresponded with each other for many years. Burr now took Wilkinson into his plot. Wilkinson fitted Burr out in a fine boat in which he proceeded to New Orleans, where he arrived on June 25, 1805, armed with a letter from Wilkinson to Daniel Clark, the richest man in the city. For two weeks Burr was lionized in New Orleans, and his proposed expedition to Mexico, no longer a secret, was talked of on all sides.

<sup>1</sup> McMaster, Vol. III, p. 57.

Late in the fall Burr returned to Washington. He had counted much on receiving aid from England, believing that country ready to engage in any project that would retard the growth of the United States. Hastening to the house of the British Minister, Burr was greatly dismayed when that gentleman informed him that no assistance from that quarter could be expected. But the will of Burr was indomitable. During the few months he spent in the East his efforts were prodigious. He sought out his old friends, army and navy officials, men of wealth, and everyone who had a grievance against the Government, and attempted to bring them into his plot. By one of these he was betrayed to President Jefferson, but Jefferson was slow to believe that there was any real danger, and made no attempt to apprehend the conspirators. Burr stated to a friend that the Government was in such an imbecile condition that with two hundred men he could drive the President and Congress into the Potomac.

In August, 1806, Burr again started westward, taking with him this time his daughter Theodosia, who was now the wife of Joseph Alston, the governor of South Carolina, reputed to be the richest planter in the South. They reached Blennerhassett Island, and the occupants were completely captivated by the wit and vivacity of the charming Theodosia, who fully believed that her father's schemes were legitimate and honorable. From this time the Blennerhassetts were the most devoted adherents of the conspirator.

This credulous Irishman was led to believe that all their projects were about to be realized. A great nation was to be founded in the West. Burr was to be the monarch as Aaron I, Mrs. Alston was to be the queen, and her little son heir apparent to the throne. But this was not all; Blenner-



hassett should represent the new nation at the court of St. James, and Wilkinson should command its armies. This was the vision presented to the simple-minded Blennerhassett, and he chattered it all around the country.

Leaving his daughter on the island, Burr went down the river to Cincinnati, and across to Nashville. All was now haste and activity. Fifteen boats were being built at Marietta, several more on the Cumberland. Men were arming on all sides and making ready for the expedition, most of whom still believed that the sole object was the conquest of Mexico. Burr was the general manager of everything. We find him first in one town, and then in another, displaying the most remarkable energy.

In Nashville a great ball was given in his honor. His hopes were now at their highest point. He was soon to become a conquering hero — one who would draw the eyes of the world — the founder of an empire — when lo! a thunderbolt came, and his whole scheme from the top to the bottom was shattered and annihilated. The bolt came in the form of a proclamation from the President of the United States.

#### THE ARREST AND THE TRIAL

President Jefferson had at last been awakened from his lethargy and led to believe that there was some real danger of an uprising in the Mississippi Valley. Hence the proclamation, issued in November, 1806, which was called forth by a letter from General Wilkinson, betraying Burr's entire plot to the President. When this proclamation was known in the West, it was no longer possible for Burr to proceed, because many of his followers had been made to believe that Jefferson knew of and favored the expedition; when they found that this was not true, they refused to follow their

leader further. The President in his proclamation did not mention Burr by name, nor make any reference to the plan of severing the Union. He simply stated that there was reason to believe that an unauthorized expedition against Mexico was about to be made, and he called upon all United States officers to arrest all persons engaged in it.

Wilkinson, now in New Orleans, in order to clear his own name, made a desperate effort to pose as the saviour of his country. He harangued the excited multitude at a public meeting; he made many arrests of suspected persons, and put the city under martial law. In short, this mighty (but it should be spelled "mitey") commander of the army blustered and fumed about at a great rate. He wished to make a loud noise, a patriotic noise, so as to cover his own false trail of the past.

Aaron Burr at this time was floating down the Mississippi with a few friends, hoping to escape arrest till he reached the sea, when he would embark for a foreign land. None knew better than himself that Jefferson's note of warning to the people had utterly blasted his prospects. None knew better than he that, if arrested, he would have to contend against an angered administration, supported by the enemies he had made in the killing of Hamilton. As he proceeded down the river he was astonished and dismayed to find that his colleague, Wilkinson, had betrayed him. A short distance above Natchez, Mississippi, Burr landed on the east bank of the river, and, disguising himself in the dress of a river boatman, he bade his companions good-by and disappeared in the wilderness.

One cold night in February, 1807, two young lawyers were playing at cards in a cabin near the village of Wakefield, Alabama, when two strangers rode up and inquired the way to Colonel Hinson's. Being informed that the colonel lived

seven miles farther on, the strangers departed. One of them, it was readily seen, was a country guide; the other seemed to be a different sort of personage. He was dressed in a rude homespun suit; but his intellectual countenance, his flashing, bright eyes, and his elegantly shaped boots, protruding from the coarse, ill-cut trousers, attracted the attention of one of the young men, whose name was Perkins.

Soon after the strangers had gone, Perkins said to his companion, "That is Aaron Burr; let us follow and arrest him."<sup>1</sup> He at once apprised the sheriff, and in a short time he and the sheriff were riding through the darkness toward Colonel Hinson's.

Arriving near the place, Perkins remained outside with the horses while the sheriff went in to make the arrest. He met the polite stranger, and was soon fascinated with his brilliant conversation. For some hours the company conversed, and this stranger was the life of the party. The sheriff had not a doubt that it was Burr, but his heart failed him; he could not arrest so elegant a gentleman. He remained overnight, and next morning actually accompanied Burr some distance as guide.

We have all heard of Marshal Ney, the French general — how he was sent to capture Napoleon returning from Elba; and how the wonderful magnetism of the old commander fascinated, won, captured him. He went to arrest the fallen Emperor; he came back his friend and ally.

Similarly did Colonel Aaron Burr captivate the sheriff of Washington County, Alabama.

Perkins waited for several hours with the horses. Suspecting at last that his friend had fallen a prey to the blandishments of Burr, he returned home. But Perkins was not to be thwarted so easily. He immediately went to Fort Stoddard

<sup>1</sup> Parton, *Life of Aaron Burr*, Vol. II, p. 93.

and apprised Captain Gaines, and in less than twenty-four hours Burr was a prisoner in the fort. After being detained here for three weeks, the distinguished prisoner was taken northward for trial.

The distance was near a thousand miles, about half of which was a dense forest. The guard consisted of nine mounted men, commanded by the plucky Perkins, who, remembering his experience with the sheriff, took his men aside and made them promise to steel their souls against the winning arts of the prisoner. The long, fatiguing march began, the party usually spending the nights in the open air. They spent one night at a small tavern in northern Georgia. The landlord, not knowing the character of his guests, began to converse on the subject that absorbed the attention in every part of the Union. "Had they heard anything of Aaron Burr, the traitor? Was he captured? Was he not a very bad man?" Burr, who was sitting in the corner, raised his head, and, fixing his blazing eyes on the landlord, said, "I am Aaron Burr — what do you want with me?"

The journey was very monotonous but for one thrilling incident. As they were passing through Chester, South Carolina, where Burr knew that he was popular, he suddenly leaped from his horse, and, appealing to the people along the streets, shouted in a loud voice:

"I am Aaron Burr, under military arrest, and claim the protection of the civil authorities."

The next instant Perkins stood before him with two drawn pistols and ordered him to remount.

Burr answered defiantly, "*I will not.*"

Perkins was unwilling to shed blood. He was a powerful man. He threw his pistols to the ground, seized his prisoner, and hurled him into the saddle. Before the spectators had recovered from their astonishment the party had left the

village behind.<sup>1</sup> Aaron Burr was a man of wonderful nerve, but for once he lost his self-control; he was unmanned; he wept like a child. It is said that in all his sufferings, and they were great, this strange man did not again exhibit weakness.

The party was directed to Richmond, Virginia, where the trial was to take place. Here they arrived the twenty-sixth of March, 1807. It would make our chapter too long were we to give a history of this trial. Let a few general statements suffice.

The trial of this ex-Vice President for treason is the most famous trial in all American history save one — that of Andrew Johnson. It was presided over by John Marshall, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and the greatest jurist this country has produced. Both sides employed counsel of the greatest ability; the most noted on Burr's side was Luther Martin of Baltimore, a framer of the Constitution; the ablest on the opposite side was William Wirt, afterward for twelve years Attorney General of the United States, and the Anti-Mason candidate for President in 1832.

The trial was long and exciting, the jury finally acquitting the prisoner for want of evidence, to the great disappointment of President Jefferson. Burr was guilty beyond a doubt; but the Constitution provides that treason "shall consist only in levying war against" the United States, or in "adhering to their enemies," and that "no person shall be convicted of treason unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the overt act." No such thing could be proved against Burr. He was a great lawyer, and he had covered his trail and managed his plot with such skill that the law had no hold on him. He was therefore set at liberty. He and Blennerhassett were then indicted for misdemeanor, to be tried later in Ohio, but the trial never came off.

<sup>1</sup> Parton, Vol. II, p. 101



## THEODOSIA

In the history of Aaron Burr there is one chapter that presents a charm of more than ordinary attraction — that which tells of the relation between him and his daughter. Theodosia was a queenly woman, of high mental gifts, and beyond all doubt of the purest and noblest type. She believed her father the most perfect of men, and never in her life seemed to doubt that his motives were the best.

When she heard of her father's arrest, she was overcome with sorrow. She hastened to Richmond, and remained during the trial. Everyone had heard of Theodosia, and everyone was charmed who came within her influence. She followed the trial with the keenness of a trained lawyer. When the acquittal was announced, her joy was unbounded. Little did she know that her grief had just begun — that one burden of sorrow would bear down upon another until the weight would be greater than she could endure.

Burr was acquitted by the jury, but not by the American people; he was detested as a traitor on every side. He spent the following winter in hiding in various places, hoping that popular clamor would subside, but it did not. In June, 1808, he escaped from New York under an assumed name and took ship for England. After spending several months in England, he was banished from that country as a dangerous person. He next went to Sweden, then to Germany, and finally to Paris. The French Government was suspicious of him and kept him under surveillance. He found no rest wherever he went. His dishonor had followed him from land to land, and he had nowhere to lay his head to rest.

But Aaron Burr had one friend whose fidelity never faltered. It was Theodosia. Her letters to him breathe a spirit of tenderness and devotion that is at once pathetic

and beautiful. The greater his persecution, as she believed it to be, the greater her adoration. Here is an extract from one of her letters written him while in Sweden:

I witness your extraordinary fortitude with new wonder at every new misfortune. Often you appear to me so superior, so elevated above all other men; I contemplate you with such strange mixture of humility, admiration, reverence, love, and pride that very little superstition would be necessary to make me worship you as a superior being. When I afterward revert to myself, how insignificant do my best qualities appear. My vanity would be greater, if I had not been placed so near you, and yet my pride is our relationship.

Such devotion from such a woman would buoy up the spirits of any man. Burr often said that his only object in life was to serve his daughter and her little boy. The constancy of this daughter, whose honesty and sincerity cannot be questioned, means something — it means that Burr's heart was not all bad. It is true, she saw only the good, but there was good there, or he could never have been to her what he was.

Burr found no rest in Europe, and he at last decided to return to his own land, be the consequence what it may. He had been absent four years. Under an assumed name, he reached Boston in the spring of 1812. He made his way to New York, but his presence excited little interest, as war with England was about to be waged and this absorbed public attention.

On reaching America, the returned wanderer performed the one delightful task in which he had always been so faithful — writing to his daughter. Six weeks passed when he received an answer. The news it bore was sad indeed. Theodosia had lost her little boy, her only child. The boy had shown signs of unusual talent, and he was the hope and pride of his parents and his grandfather.

But the bitterest sorrow of all was yet to come to Aaron Burr.

Theodosia's grief for her lost boy did not abate, and her health began to fail. It was decided that she leave her southern home and fly to her father. Her husband would have accompanied her, but as he was Governor of South Carolina he could not leave his official duties. She embarked at Charleston in a small schooner late in December, 1812, occupying the best cabin with her maid and her physician. Fond were the good-by's to her loving husband as the vessel sailed away; fond were her anticipations of soon embracing a father whose devotion to her had been as constant as the northern star.

The vessel was lost upon the ocean. It was never seen nor heard of again, and not a life was saved!

The agonized suspense of Burr can only be imagined. The eager letters exchanged between him and his son-in-law, the longing for news of the lost one, the hope, the despair, and at last the settled conviction that he was alone now, that he would see his daughter's face no more, furnish the most pathetic chapter in the strange history of Aaron Burr.

He said to a friend that, when he realized the truth of his daughter's death, the world became to him a blank and life lost all its value. To her bereaved husband he wrote that he felt himself severed from the human race. Governor Alston survived his wife but a few years, but the stormy career of Burr was yet to continue for nearly a quarter of a century. He quietly practiced his profession and earned a good income; but he never rose in public esteem. After suffering two years as a hopeless paralytic he died in 1836 in his eighty-first year.

## CHAPTER XI

### SOME INCIDENTS OF THE SECOND WAR WITH ENGLAND

WE have had two wars with England, the Revolution and the War of 1812, so called because it began that year. Frequently since 1812 we have had serious disputes with that country, but without coming to blows. And it is the sincerest hope of every true American and every true Briton that never again will the two nations engage in war with each other.

It would be a crime against civilization for these two mighty, English-speaking nations ever again to engage in war. Their disputes and differences should be settled by arbitration, that is, by conferring and agreeing to compromise, by means of private arrangement, or through the League of Nations.

### IMPRESSMENT OF SEAMEN

One of the chief causes of the War of 1812 was the impressment of seamen. For a long time Great Britain was at war with France and many of her seamen deserted her ships because of hard service and small love for their country. Most of them found service in American vessels, and when England needed them and called for them to come back they refused to do so.

The British Government then asked the United States to give them up that they might be forced to go back. But the United States refused to do this, because many of

them wished to become, and some had become, American citizens. America always permitted and even encouraged foreigners to come to our shores, to make this country their home and to become citizens, and it would have been unfair to make an exception of these English sailors. But our Government did offer to make an agreement to exchange deserters from the navies.

England refused to agree to this and declared that she would force the men back even if she had to take them right off our ships.

And so the impressment business began. An English warship would stop an American ship at sea and force the whole crew to march before the British officers, who would pick out this man and that man, pronounce them English deserters, and force them into the British ships.

This occurred a great many times and was kept up for many years; and the worst thing about it was that an American was often taken by mistake. Perhaps the British did not intentionally make this mistake, but they were very careless in picking out their men and hundreds of Americans who had never been in England were impressed into the British navy.

Our Government protested and cried out against the practice, but England seemed to think that we were too weak to defend ourselves and went right on. One old Revolutionary soldier wrote a bitter complaint to Congress, stating that his sons had been impressed into the British service and that if such was the kind of liberty he had fought for he would rather be without it.

The worst instance of impressment occurred in 1807, when the British war vessel, the *Leopard*, fired on the American vessel, the *Chesapeake*, killing three men and wounding eighteen. The captain of the *Leopard* then forced



five of the *Chesapeake's* crew into his own ship, and three of them afterwards were proved to be Americans.

This outrage was denounced in every part of the Union. Many Americans were in favor of immediate war with England, but President Thomas Jefferson and Congress did not think we were ready for that yet. War is a very serious thing.

About four years after this the American people were treated to a bit of news of a very different nature. Here it is:

A British warship, cruising in American waters, was said to have impressed an American citizen named Diggio. When the people heard that such a thing had happened right on our coast they flared up in anger. It must be remembered that the Americans were getting bolder and more conscious of their power to defend themselves. The cruel business had gone on long enough. The Government officers thought so, too, and a huge war vessel, the *President*, was sent out to find the English ship and rescue Diggio.

The *President* sighted an English ship, and supposed it to be the guilty one. But it was evening, and the captain of the *President*, not being able to see the name, called through a trumpet, "What ship is that?" The answer was a shot from the stranger.

This opened the way. The *President* began firing in earnest with one broadside after another. The strange vessel returned the fire, but in fifteen minutes was silenced and disabled. It proved to be the *Little Belt*, a smaller ship than the *President*. What was the result of the battle? One boy was slightly wounded on the *President* and twelve men lay dead and twenty-one wounded on the deck of the *Little Belt*. The dishonor of the *Chesapeake* affair had been wiped out.

This was about the end of the impressment of seamen. The war soon came, and never since that war has England attempted to impress a man from an American ship, and we venture to predict that she never will.

#### THE TWO HULLS

Hull the elder was an uncle of Hull the younger. The elder Hull was a man of sixty; the younger was forty. Each played a prominent part in the War of 1812. One was a brigadier general, the other was captain of a warship.

General William Hull had been an officer in the Revolution, and after 1805 was governor of the Territory of Michigan. When the war came President Madison made him commander of the American forces at Detroit. He did not desire the honor, but accepted it to please the President.

Now it happened that the British commander in Canada was a man of great vigor and ability. This was General Isaac Brock. When Brock heard that Hull was at Detroit he determined to lead an army thither and attack him. On he came with an army of 1,300, nearly half of whom were Indians.

In the war of the Revolution General Hull had been a brave soldier, but now his courage began to fail. He knew that the food in the fort could not last more than a month, that the woods were full of hostile Indians, and that there was no American force within hundreds of miles to come to his aid. Perhaps he would have cared little for his own life, but there were women and children in the fort, and among them was his own daughter.

Hull sat with his back against a rampart in deep dejection. Then suddenly a cannon ball from a British battery fell in the fort and killed four men. Hull's courage was now entirely gone. He raised a white flag, and General Brock took

possession of the fort, of Detroit, of all Michigan. We shall see a little later that England was not destined to keep Michigan and add it to Canada, and how it was recovered by the United States.

The story of the other Hull is far more pleasing to American readers.

Captain Isaac Hull commanded the *Constitution*, one of our finest warships.

Off the Atlantic coast there were many English vessels. One of them was the *Guerrière*, a fine, 38-gun frigate. A London paper had boasted that no American ship could cope with the *Guerrière*, and her own captain had challenged any one of our vessels to a duel.

Captain Hull knew about this and was quite willing to accept the challenge. One day while cruising in the Atlantic, about 800 miles east of Boston, he sighted the *Guerrière*, and each vessel recognized the other as a mortal foe, and here upon the rolling deep they prepared for a duel to the death.

The vessels swung round each other till they came within range of the heavy guns, when both opened with broadsides. For nearly an hour the deadly conflict raged. The British vessel suffered far more than the American. At last when her mainmast fell and she was a helpless wreck, her captain gave up the contest and surrendered the vessel. Seventy-nine of his men had fallen and only fourteen Americans. Captain Hull took the surviving British to his own ship as prisoners, set fire to the *Guerrière*, and sailed for Boston. This fight took place on August 19, 1812, three days after Captain Hull's unhappy uncle had surrendered Detroit.

#### PERRY'S VICTORY ON LAKE ERIE

One day in the autumn of 1812 a man from Erie, Pennsylvania, named Daniel Dobbins, came to the White

House in Washington to speak to the President on a very important matter. His story was the following:

In the spring of the same year he and two friends, being engaged in the lake trade, made a voyage far up into the lake region and were captured by the British. As they were being brought from the north they witnessed a scene never to be forgotten — nothing less than the surrender of Detroit and all Michigan to an army of British and Indians, the Americans under General William Hull yielding without firing a gun.

A little later he and his friends had escaped and returned to Erie, whereupon the commanding officer there had sent him to Washington to relate the matter to the President and to suggest that a fleet be built to sweep the British from the lakes.

Daniel Dobbins returned to Erie a few weeks later, and the building of the fleet was begun. The commander chosen for it was a young naval officer, a native of Rhode Island, who, being the son of a naval officer, had spent much of his life on the sea — Oliver Hazard Perry.

Perry soon made things move at Erie, but the task before him was a hard one. The timber for the ships was still standing in the woods; the guns, the cordage, the canvas, and other equipments had to be dragged on sleds through the deep snow for hundreds of miles from New York, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh. Fifty ship carpenters were brought from the East. The work was pushed day and night and by the next summer the new-born fleet was ready for service.

There was on Lake Erie a small British fleet commanded by Commodore Barclay, a brave officer who had fought under Nelson at Trafalgar. He would have destroyed Perry's ships unfinished, but for a bar in the lake where the water was too shallow for him to cross. But this he would do: he

would watch until Perry finished his fleet and came out in the open lake and then attack him. He waited and waited; then one Sunday in August he accepted an invitation to spend the day with a rich Canadian, and was absent two or three days. During that time Perry, with Herculean effort, succeeded in crossing the bar, swung out into the lake and stood ready to meet the enemy.

When Barclay found out what had happened he seemed to have changed his mind; he fled westward, and it took Perry a month to find him. But he did find him — and on September 10, 1813, was fought the famous battle of Lake Erie.

The battle began at noon, and before sunset of that day the British had no fleet on Lake Erie.

At first it seemed that the English would win. Perry in his flagship, the *Lawrence*, had to fight four of the enemy's vessels at the same time. They were all much crippled; but the noble *Lawrence* was entirely disabled. Of her crew of 103 men, 83 lay dead or wounded on the deck. Her rigging was shot to pieces. Perry fired the last gun with his own hand, and then, with his young brother, but twelve years old, and a few sailors, escaped in an open boat to the next largest vessel, the *Niagara*. This ship was uninjured, while most of the British ships were already badly crippled, and Perry sailed among them attacking them right and left with great fury.

About three o'clock the British raised the white flag and surrendered, and the battle of Lake Erie was over.

Before the smoke of battle had cleared away Perry sat down and wrote the famous dispatch to General William Henry Harrison, who was then commanding in northern Ohio.

We have met the enemy and they are ours.



This battle did great things for America. It gave us the control of the lakes and opened the way for the recovery of Michigan, which soon followed; it greatly encouraged the people and awakened in them a determination to continue the war until the last foe was driven off, and it did one thing more; it made Oliver Hazard Perry a national hero and gave him an immortal name in American history.

#### A FAMOUS VICTORY

The war continued until the close of the year 1814, about two and a half years in all. As we have noticed, Michigan was recovered through Perry's victory on Lake Erie.

At Queenstown Heights, on the Niagara River, a hard battle was fought in which the American general, Winfield Scott, was taken prisoner and the British commander, General Brock, was killed. The death of Brock left a vacancy that none could fill in the British army. In August, 1814, the British captured and partly burned the American capital, but were repulsed before reaching Baltimore.

When the war had dragged on for more than two years and neither side was gaining any great advantage, both desired peace, and commissioners were sent by each country to Ghent, Belgium, to arrange a treaty.

Why the British should have sent a great fleet with 20,000 men to the Gulf of Mexico at the same time that they sent men to Ghent to make peace is not easy to understand; but that is just what they did. How this army succeeded, or, rather, how it failed, we shall see.

The British army was commanded by General Pakenham, a brother-in-law of the Duke of Wellington, the hero of Waterloo.

The people of New Orleans were in a flutter of excitement and fear when they learned that Pakenham was in the gulf

and was hastening toward their city. Few were the soldiers in the city, and not a man there to command an army. But the news soon spread that General Jackson had come, and there was a quick change in the people.

Jackson — you will remember him as the boy Andrew who was captured in time of the Revolution, and who walked forty miles while suffering with the smallpox — Jackson was a man of prodigious energy. He soon had the city in a condition for defense. A small army of about 3,500 men were soon gathered, and it was time, for the British were coming.

On the morning of January 8 the famous battle of New Orleans was fought. Jackson had thrown up an embankment a mile long and his men fought from behind it.

At break of day the scarlet line of the English army was seen advancing, and the Americans held their fire until the enemy was within range of the cannon. Then burst forth the terrific roar of artillery and the enemy was mowed down like grass before the reaper's scythe. But the gaps were filled with living men, and on they came again and still again.

When the British came within musket range the infantry opened, and the whole American breastwork was a line of fire.

General Pakenham, seeing his men waver, rode to the front and, waving his hat in the air, cried: "For shame, remember that you are British soldiers." His right arm was shattered by a musket ball, but he kept on cheering his men. Next moment he was pierced through the body by two bullets, and at the same time his horse was killed by a bursting shell. Rider and horse fell together. The falling commander was caught by loving hands and borne to the rear, and a few minutes later he was dead.

The enemy soon fled. The battle was over and the city was saved. Seldom has an army received so fearful a defeat as the English received on that day. Their loss was about 2,600 while the American loss was next to nothing — about twenty-one men.

A few days after the battle the British (what was left of them) went back to their ships and sailed away and were seen no more on the shores of Louisiana. The city of New Orleans rejoiced exceedingly over the great victory. The people erected a triumphal arch in the public square and received Jackson and his army with great enthusiasm.

Among the many incidents of the battle one of the most touching was that of the little bugler. A boy of fourteen years, on the British side, was a bugler, that is, one who blows a bugle during the battle to cheer the soldiers. This boy climbed a tree and sat among the branches throughout the battle blowing his horn. The ground around the tree was torn with cannon balls and bullets; the branches were shot off near him, but the lad was unhurt. After the battle he was taken to the American camp, where he was shown every kindness, some throwing their arms around the gallant little soldier.

A strange thing occurred after the battle. As the Americans were walking over the ground offering aid to the wounded, several hundred British soldiers rose up unhurt from among the dead and wounded. They explained that when they saw that they had no hope of winning they dropped down, pretending to be dead, and thus saved their lives.

The one regrettable thing about the battle of New Orleans was that it was unnecessary, and all the bloodshed might have been prevented. The treaty of peace was signed in Belgium three weeks before the battle took place. But there was no Atlantic cable and no telegraph, and several

weeks must pass before the news of the peace could be known in America. The British, however, could blame only themselves for this drastic defeat. They should not have sent an army to America at a time when peace negotiations were going on.

The War of 1812 was over, and the American people felt no little pride in the fact that they had at least held their own for two and a half years against one of the greatest nations of the earth. Never after this did Great Britain attempt to impress American seamen. Never after this was it a reproach to be an American, for America henceforth was respected by all nations.

## CHAPTER XII

### ODDS AND ENDS

THIS chapter will be devoted to a notice of several characters and events of the first half of the nineteenth century that are important but probably not very well known to the average reader.

#### ALBERT GALLATIN

The majority of Americans of this generation know but little of the life of Albert Gallatin, and yet he was a very prominent man for a long period in American history. He was no doubt the most distinguished European-born citizen in the history of the country.

Albert Gallatin was born in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1761. His people were somewhat prominent and possessed some wealth, but both his parents died before he was nine years old. He was then put in a boarding school, and here he remained till he was eighteen. At this time the War of the Revolution was going on in America. Albert's grandmother was a friend of the Landgrave of Hesse, who was furnishing soldiers — the Hessians — to the English king for the American war. She was anxious that her grandson should win military honors, as some of his ancestors had done, and applied to the Landgrave for a commission for him as an officer in one of the regiments to be sent to America.

When Albert was informed of this he declared, "I will never serve a tyrant," and his grandmother gave him a sharp cuff on the ear.



Albert was of a romantic turn. He had heard much of America — of the vast unexplored wilderness — and he decided to come to the United States not to engage in the war, but to see, to explore, to enjoy the wild life, and probably to make the new land his home.

With a young companion as ardent as himself he set out and reached Boston in the spring of 1780. The first winter they spent among the pines on the frontier of Maine, where they tracked the moose and explored the streams and lakes to their hearts' content.

One day they came to an inn, and the landlord, seeing that they were foreigners, asked:

"From France, eh?"

"No," answered Gallatin, "we are not from France."

"From Germany?"

"No."

"From Spain?"

"No, not from Spain."

"Well, then, where on earth are you from, or what are you?" asked the landlord.

"I am a Swiss," answered Gallatin.

"A Swiss, a Swiss," said the landlord, "who are the Swiss, one of the lost tribes of Israel?"

The next year young Gallatin taught French in Harvard College, and a year later we find him on his way to the West. He had heard of the rich lands of the Ohio Valley, and thither he bent his steps. On the way he spent some months at Richmond, Virginia, and here he made many friends, among whom were Patrick Henry, governor of the state, and John Marshall, afterwards chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

On coming of age, Gallatin received a sum of money from his father's estate, and when he reached the Ohio he

purchased several thousand acres of land along that river in Virginia and Pennsylvania. On a hill where the view of mountain and valley was magnificent he built a house and called the place Friendship Hill. He soon married a beautiful girl and took her to his forest home.

Their joy, however, was of short duration. Within a few months death stole the lovely bride and the young husband was left disconsolate and alone. So great was his sense of loneliness that he thought of returning to the home of his childhood in Switzerland. But at length he came to be interested in politics and in this he found his true vocation. He was elected to the Pennsylvania legislature and at once took the lead in that body.

But there was one act of his life that he always regretted. He took part in the Whisky Insurrection of western Pennsylvania. This he afterwards acknowledged to be a "political sin" of which he repented. At the same time it was Gallatin who counseled that the people yield and obey the laws instead of rising in open rebellion.

In December, 1795, Gallatin became a member of Congress, in the lower House, where he served several terms. He was without exception the ablest member of the House, and its leader as long as he served in it.

When Jefferson became President he chose Gallatin secretary of the treasury, and he made a happy choice, for there was no man in the country more fitted for this responsible position in the Cabinet. For fourteen years Mr. Gallatin filled this office, and he then resigned only because President Madison wanted him to go to Ghent, Belgium, as a commissioner to arrange peace at the close of the War of 1812. The writing of the treaty was almost wholly the work of Gallatin.

When James Monroe became President, in 1817, he asked

Gallatin to enter his Cabinet and again become secretary of the treasury, but Gallatin declined. He was then chosen as our minister to France, where he served for some years, and later he was minister to England.

As Gallatin grew old he desired above all things to quit public life. He retired to his home at Friendship Hill, but was soon asked by the President to become again minister to France. He declined, and later he refused to become a member of the Panama Congress of 1826. After he had passed his eighty-second year he was invited to become secretary of the treasury, but of course declined.

He lived to be eighty-eight, and spent his last years studying the language and habits of the Indians, a subject that was always of great interest to him. His second wife passed away in 1848, and the next year, at the home of his son-in-law on Long Island, Albert Gallatin breathed his last, after a long life of great usefulness and honor.

#### DOLLY MADISON

There was, in the early years of the Revolution, a wealthy Quaker named John Payne who lived in Virginia and held slaves. But he disliked slavery and decided to set his slaves free and move to Philadelphia. He had a daughter named Dolly, a beautiful girl, who was yet a child when they reached the Quaker city.

Dolly was a favorite everywhere. She was not only beautiful, she was most vivacious, witty, and entertaining. As she approached womanhood she won the heart of a rich young man named John Todd, and they were married not long after.

Three years later, Philadelphia had an awful scourge of yellow fever, and thousands were swept into the grave. Among the victims were John Todd and one of his baby

boys. The bereaved wife lay at death's door for days, but recovered.

Time passed and the poisonous disease disappeared. The heart of youth cannot be wounded beyond repair. Dolly recovered her spirits, her wit, her joyous nature.

James Madison was a member of Congress of national fame. He was a middle-aged bachelor from Virginia. Congress at that time met in Philadelphia. One night Mr. Madison saw Dolly, now a rich widow of twenty-two. He was so charmed that he asked a mutual friend, Aaron Burr, to seek for him an introduction. She had heard a great deal of Mr. Madison, and did not object to meeting him. The next evening was set. Then she wrote to a friend as follows:

DEAR FRIEND: Thou must come to me this evening; Aaron Burr says that the great little Madison has asked to be brought to me this evening.

Mr. Madison came, and the vivacious widow took his heart by storm. A few months later they were married and the bride became Dolly Madison — the name by which she is known in history.

Thomas Jefferson, during the eight years of his Presidency, was a widower and Mrs. Dolly Madison was looked upon as the first lady of the land, as her husband was Secretary of State.

Mr. Madison himself was then elected President, and his charming wife graced the White House as few women have ever done. Foreign diplomats, visitors from abroad, government officials, in fact everybody admired and honored this lovable woman.

Let us notice one incident of her White House experience. It was in the time of the war — in August, 1814. A British army had landed near Washington and was approaching the

city and there was no sufficient American army to protect it. President Madison with some officers went out to Bladensburg, and there before night, on August 24, a battle was fought.

At noon Mrs. Madison wrote her sister:

I have been turning my spyglass in every direction and watching with unwearied anxiety, hoping to discover the approach of my dear husband and his friends; but, alas! I cannot see them.

At three o'clock she wrote:

Three o'clock — will you believe it, my sister? We have had a battle near Bladensburg, and here I am still within sound of the cannon. Mr. Madison comes not. May God protect us. Two messengers covered with dust came to bid me fly; but here I mean to wait for him.

At a later hour, however, Mrs. Madison did fly, and did not know until next day that her husband was safe. She had carefully packed in wagons the most valuable articles in the White House. When the men were ready to start she informed them that there was one thing more that must be taken — the large picture of General Washington, made by a famous artist. The men declared that the British were coming and there was no time to unscrew the large frame from the wall. But Mrs. Madison declared that they must save the picture, and she ordered that the frame be broken and the canvas taken out and rolled. This was done, and that fine picture of the Father of his Country still exists — thanks to Dolly Madison.

She fled to the country and spent the night with friends. That night the British burned the White House and other public buildings, and from that time to the close of the administration the President and his wife had to live in a rented house.



When Mr. Madison ceased to be President he retired to his plantation in Virginia. Here he grew old, and for years before his death he was an invalid, scarcely able to leave his house. His wife had been accustomed from girlhood to gay society, but now she gave up all that and devoted her whole time and energy to caring for her decrepit husband, and it was her buoyant, joyous nature that soothed him as nothing else could have done.

He died in 1836, the last of the framers of the Constitution. Mrs. Madison was twenty-one years younger than her husband, and she lived many years after his death. After spending some months in arranging his papers she moved to Washington, where she spent the remainder of her life among loving friends.

But there was one deep sorrow that weighed on her life. Her only child, the boy who had escaped the yellow fever when his father and little brother had died, gave his aged mother no comfort. He was a worthless spendthrift, and followed evil ways. When he should have been her greatest comfort he was the one burden on her soul that nothing but death could remove.

One night as she sat listening to a friend reading from the Gospel of St. John she sank in her chair, a victim of apoplexy. For two days she lingered, and waking now and then she would hold out her arms to embrace the loving friends that stood around, and thus in death she was the same fond, loving friend that she had always been.

#### A VISITOR FROM FRANCE

In a former chapter we noticed the coming of the brave young Frenchman, Lafayette, to aid the Americans in their long struggle for liberty. Almost fifty years had passed since then, and now he was an aged man with silver hair and

wrinkled brow; but his heart was ever young and his love of liberty never grew cold.

Many were the experiences of Lafayette during those fifty years. France had passed through a revolution far more bloody than ours, and he was always found on the side of human liberty. Five years he spent in an Austrian prison because of his principles, and he had lost his fortune.

He accepted the invitation of President Monroe to visit the people for whom he had fought in his youth, and landed in New York in August, 1824.

He was received with the boom of cannon, the ringing of bells, and the shouts of the people. Great festivals were held in his honor in the cities of the East — New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. But the rising West was not satisfied that he spend his whole time in the East; the people in all the states urged that he pay them a visit, and he did so. From Washington he passed through Virginia, paid a visit to the aged ex-President, Thomas Jefferson, at Monticello, and proceeded through Georgia to New Orleans.

In every city and village he was given a welcome by the people, and especially by the school children, who marched in lines carrying flowers and banners.

He went up the Mississippi in a steamboat, the *Mechanic*, and met with a serious accident. The *Mechanic* struck a snag in the river and sank within a few minutes. The passengers escaped drowning, but lost all their baggage. Lafayette lost his carriage and many valuable papers. He passed up the Ohio River to Pittsburgh and from there across the country to Lake Erie. He then returned to New York by way of the Erie Canal and the Hudson River. In one hundred days he had visited seventeen states, having traveled five thousand miles.

The one thing that pleased the famous French general above all things was to meet the old soldiers of the Revolution. There were not many of them left, but here and there he found one, tottering with age. In New York he had a long talk with Colonel Willet, a veteran in his eighty-fifth year. The two had borne arms together on the battle field, and had often slept in the same tent when in camp. What a joy it was to meet again and talk over those days of long ago!

Lafayette spent several months in Washington, and Henry Clay, the Speaker of the House, introduced to him all the members of Congress, and Congress did a noble thing. It voted him a whole township of land in Florida and \$200,000 in cash, not as a gift, but as "part pay" for his services in the Revolution. Having lost his fortune, the distinguished Frenchman highly appreciated this generous bonus.

Lafayette visited the tomb of Washington at Mount Vernon, and was the guest of honor at the laying of the corner stone of the Bunker Hill Monument.

It was fifty years to the day after the famous battle of Bunker Hill (June 17, 1825) that this corner stone was laid. Never had Boston experienced such a gala day. The coming of the dawn was greeted with the roar of cannon. The people gathered in uncounted thousands, and when the procession moved through the streets, with the visiting Frenchman as the honored guest, the people who lined the streets cheered with great enthusiasm.

When they reached the place where the monument was to be reared the first ceremony was to introduce the few survivors of the famous battle to the honored guest, after which he laid the corner stone with his own hands. He was then asked to take a seat reserved for him under a pavilion, but he refused, saying:

“No, I belong there among the survivors of the Revolution and there I must sit.”

The oration was given by America's greatest orator, Daniel Webster, and this was one of the greatest orations of his life.

A few months later Lafayette sailed for his native land in a Government vessel, the *Brandywine*, which was named after the battle in which he had been wounded, in 1777. No other foreigner has ever been received with such a welcome in this country as that which was given to Lafayette.

#### A BLOODLESS DUEL

In the early years of our Republic the practice of fighting duels was widespread. A man who felt himself insulted by another would send a challenge to the other to meet him on the “field of honor,” as they called it. Dueling was not confined to the ruffians and rowdies; it was engaged in by nearly every class. Often a duel ended with no harm to either side; but sometimes it ended in a tragedy.

The great American statesman, Alexander Hamilton, was killed in a duel by Aaron Burr, Vice President of the United States. Stephen Decatur, a famous naval officer, was slain in the same way by a fellow officer. But the duel here to be described turned out happily, no one being hurt. It was between two leading statesmen — Henry Clay and John Randolph.

Henry Clay is well known; John Randolph was a member of Congress from Virginia. He served at least twenty-five years and was known as the wittiest man ever in Congress. He and Henry Clay fought a duel, and both came out whole. Here is how it occurred.

It was in 1826. John Quincy Adams was President of the United States and Henry Clay was Secretary of State.

They had arranged to send delegates to the Panama Congress, which was held that year. But many members of our Congress were very much opposed to the project, and some of them said sharp things about it. Randolph was one of these, and he made a speech in the Senate in which he referred to Adams and Clay as "the Puritan and the blackleg."

Clay was very angry when he heard this and he sent Randolph a challenge to a duel. Randolph did not want to fight Clay, least of all to wound or kill him. In fact, he rather liked him. True, he had called him a blackleg in a speech, but Randolph often used such terms in a reckless way and did not expect them to be taken too seriously. As a gentleman was not expected to refuse a challenge, Mr. Randolph accepted.

Each man chose a "second," that is, a friend to make all arrangements. Now these seconds did not wish to see either Clay or Randolph hurt, so they dallied with the subject for one reason or another, thinking that Mr. Clay would cool down and no duel be fought. A whole week passed in this way, but Clay made no sign of relenting. Then the seconds devised a plan by which they hoped to make the duelists miss each other. The signal to shoot was this: "One, two, three, fire, stop." Neither was to fire his pistol before he heard the word "fire," nor after he heard the word "stop." The seconds decided to count so fast that there would hardly be time to fire, or at least no time to take careful aim.

The company, including Senator Thomas H. Benton, the famous Missourian, drove across the Potomac to the Virginian side, on April 8, 1826. Randolph had said to Benton that he would fire his pistol in the air and not at Mr. Clay, but he changed his mind. They met in a dense wood and stood ten paces apart. The signal was given, and the scheme



worked well. The count was so fast that the duelists had little time to take aim. Both fired and both missed.

They then reloaded to try again. While they were doing so Randolph said aside to Senator Benton that he would not fire at Clay again, that he would not kill him for all the wealth of the United States. The signal was given again. Clay fired and the bullet passed through Randolph's coat. Randolph then shot his pistol into the air, threw it to the ground and said: "I do not fire at you, Mr. Clay." He then walked toward Clay with extended hand. This was too much. Clay's anger was gone in an instant. He threw his pistol to the ground and went to meet Randolph, who said with mock seriousness:

"Mr. Clay, you owe me a new coat."

"I'm glad the debt is no greater," said Clay, and the two men engaged in a hearty, old-fashioned hand-shake.

#### INAUGURATION OF "OLD HICKORY"

Again we meet with the one whom we saw as a boy in the Revolution walking forty miles while suffering with the smallpox. We met him also at the battle of New Orleans, in January, 1815. Now for the third time here he is — Andrew Jackson, often called "Old Hickory."

He came to be called by this nickname in this way: One time during the War of 1812 he was leading an army home after a campaign, a distance of several hundred miles. It was a body of infantry, that is, foot soldiers. The general himself had three good horses, but he loaned these to sick men who could not walk and himself walked with the rest. As they were plodding along some one said, "The general is tough," and another answered, "As tough as hickory." From this he came to be called "Old Hickory," and the name clung to him through life.

Andrew Jackson was often called the people's President. He was the first (but not the last) of our Presidents to rise from the ranks of the common people. All who came before him were from well-known or wealthy families. Washington was one of the richest landowners in America; John Adams was a famous lawyer and a signer of the Declaration of Independence; Jefferson's father owned thousands of acres of land in Virginia, and Madison and Monroe were from families of the same class. But Jackson rose from the ranks of the poor and unknown.

After a hot contest in 1828 Jackson defeated John Quincy Adams and was elected President of the United States. A few weeks later his beloved wife died. His age was then sixty-one, but his friends declared that he aged twenty years in a night because of her death, so great was his attachment to her, and it was said that from this time, as long as he lived, he never went to bed at night without looking at her picture.

Soon after her funeral he started on his long, laborious journey from Nashville, Tennessee, to Washington. He went by way of the Cumberland and Ohio Rivers to Pittsburgh by steamboat, and at every town and every landing the people shouted him a royal welcome. He reached the capital city some weeks before the fourth of March, and when that day came the city was crowded with vast throngs of people who had come to see the people's man made President. One eyewitness wrote that it seemed that half the nation had rushed at once into the capital.

March 4 was one of the clearest, balmiest days in the spring. Jackson walked to the capitol, and when he appeared before the multitude, "the peal of shouting," says the writer above quoted, "that arose rent the air, and seemed to shake the very ground."

When the chief justice, John Marshall, administered the oath of office, Jackson bowed his head and the crowd grew reverently silent. The ceremony over, the new President rode on horseback to the White House, the crowd following in all kinds of vehicles, and thousands on foot, walking, running helter-skelter and shouting themselves hoarse. At the White House they were treated to orange punch — barrels and tubs full of it.

So dense was the crowd that at one time Jackson was pinned against the wall and could not move. He was rescued by a number of his friends, who caught hands and pressed the people back. The rabble had full sway. They stood on the costly sofas and the damask-satin-covered chairs with their muddy boots, and accidentally broke a fine chandelier.

What did Jackson say to all this? Did he get angry? He had a very decided temper, as we well know, but it did not appear on that day. He simply said, "Let the boys have a good time once in four years," and probably he never said anything that gives more insight into the cause of his great popularity.

#### A CAPTAIN IN THE BLACK HAWK WAR

In the first place, the Black Hawk War was a very small, insignificant affair, and scarcely deserves to be mentioned in American history.

In the second place, the captain here referred to was not much of a captain after all. He never had any military training worth mentioning before this war, nor during this war, nor afterwards. He never was in a battle, never had a gun fired at him, and never shot at an enemy. It is true that blood was drawn on this midsummer campaign against the Indians in 1832; blood was drawn on this very captain

we are writing about, as he himself afterwards asserted on the floor of Congress, but not by the enemy; it was drawn by mosquitoes.

Why all this about a war that was hardly a war at all, and about this officer who was hardly an officer at all?

Well, here is the reason: When a man becomes great and famous we like to look back to his boyhood and see what he was then. The fame of this man came to fill the world, and it still does. He was probably the most notable world figure of the nineteenth century. His name was Abraham Lincoln.

At this time Lincoln was a young man of twenty-three. He had lived in three states — Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois. He was a man of many occupations: a farmer, a rail splitter, a postmaster, a storekeeper, a surveyor, a river boatman, and now a soldier.

When Black Hawk, chief of the Sac Indians, broke a treaty with the whites and moved his tribe across the Mississippi into Illinois, the governor of that state called for volunteers. The young men began to enlist, and one of the first was Abraham Lincoln. In his own neighborhood there was a considerable number of volunteers, but they had no officer to lead them, and they decided to make one. They chose as their captain the most popular one among them — Abraham Lincoln.

He knew no more than the rest of them about military tactics, but with a natural self-confidence that later carried him through a far greater war he assumed the command, collected his men, and they started on foot for the seat of war. One day as they were marching along, two abreast, they came to a fence with a turnstile which would admit of only one passing through at a time. Now the commander did not know what words a military officer uses to make his

men break ranks. So he shouted: "This company is dissolved for two minutes; it will form in line again on the other side of the fence."

For many days this company marched on. At length it joined the main army, some 2,500 men. But no enemy was to be found. The Indians were wise enough to keep out of the way. Perhaps they had heard of the gallant company from Illinois, with the tall, black-haired captain who was ready for any emergency, even to marching his men single file through a turnstile. Many of the volunteers grew restless and wanted to go home, and several hundred of them were discharged. Among those who volunteered to remain was Captain Lincoln.

Among the officers in this war was another future President, Zachary Taylor. And there was a gallant young cavalry officer from Mississippi who had married a daughter of Zachary Taylor. In his bright uniform he sat gracefully on his horse. Whether he noticed the tall, awkward-looking, improvised captain from Illinois I cannot say. They may have seen each other, but probably did not meet or converse. And they never met afterwards, but the time came when they heard and knew a very great deal about each other. The name of the young cavalry officer was Jefferson Davis.

We shall not pretend to give a history of this little war. Our purpose is simply to give an episode in the life of Lincoln which is not widely known. The army made a detour into Wisconsin and there were a few slight battles, but Captain Lincoln did not happen to be present at any of them. He therefore never experienced the exhilaration, the fear, or whatever it may be, of a soldier under fire.

The war continued but three months. Black Hawk promised to be good — to keep on his own side of the river — and kept his promise. Some time after this Black Hawk



made a tour of the East and visited the great cities of the Atlantic slope. When he saw what a vast power the United States was he knew that it would be utter folly for the scattered Indian tribes to make war on such a mighty people.

Years later when Abraham Lincoln was serving in Congress he made a humorous speech about his experience in the Black Hawk War. Here are a few words from it:

“By the way, Mr. Speaker, did you know that I am a military hero? Yes, sir, in the days of the Black Hawk War I fought, bled, and came away — I had a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes; and although I never fainted from loss of blood, I can truly say I was often very hungry.”

#### A CARRIAGE DRIVE IN ENGLAND

It is not my purpose to say much about this carriage drive, but rather to use it to introduce two prominent American citizens — Martin Van Buren and Washington Irving. Mr. Van Buren had been a United States senator and later was elected governor of New York. He resigned the governorship to enter the Cabinet of President Jackson as Secretary of State. After he had served in the Cabinet for about two years a position opened to him that he thought he would like better. The American minister to England resigned and Van Buren was appointed to fill the place. President Jackson was always very friendly to Van Buren and granted him every favor that was in his power.

He made this appointment in the summer of 1831, when Congress was not in session. The Senate must pass judgment on such appointments, but if they are made when that body is not in session the one appointed may accept the office and serve till the next session of Congress, when the Senate must vote on the appointment.

Mr. Van Buren did not wait for the December meeting of

Congress. He accepted the mission and sailed for London, arriving there in September. On reaching the English metropolis he met Washington Irving, the famous American author, whose books he had often read and of whom he had heard a great deal. Irving had been abroad for many years. He had recently come from Spain, where he had finished his *Life of Columbus* and *Conquest of Granada*. He now met Mr. Van Buren, and the two became fast friends. He introduced the new minister to the high social life of London. No other American knew the great city so well or was so popular among all classes in England.

Washington Irving was born in New York in April, 1783, a few months before General Washington disbanded his army there, and was one of the first to receive his name. At the age of twenty-six he became famous by publishing his humorous *Knickerbocker History of New York*, and he was the first American writer to gain a reputation in Europe.

Irving was at the height of his career at the time he met Van Buren in London. After the two men had spent some weeks in London society they decided on a carriage drive to various famous places. Van Buren knew almost nothing of English rural life except what he had learned from Irving's writings. He had read *The Sketch Book* and *Bracebridge Hall*, and now it was the joy of his life to visit the scenes therein described with the very author who had described them. They visited Oxford and Stratford, the birthplace of Shakespeare; Kenilworth and Warwick Castle and Newstead Abbey and many other places famed in song and story. At Stratford they stopped at a little inn called the Red Horse and found there the same obliging little landlady who had been described by Irving in his *Sketch Book*. I wonder if there is any boy or girl reading this book who has not read the *Sketch Book* or *Bracebridge Hall*?

After this delightful drive the two friends returned to London and again entered the social life of the great city. But one day in February, 1832, Mr. Van Buren received a bit of news from America which astonished him. He heard that the United States Senate had refused to confirm his appointment as minister to England. He had made enemies in the Senate and they now thought to end his public career at a stroke; but such things often turn out differently from what is intended. The American people thought the Senate had dealt too harshly with Van Buren, that it only showed a spiteful feeling in rejecting his appointment to London, and they pronounced their verdict later. We all know the rest of the story. Van Buren, after a tour on the Continent, returned to America, and before that year — 1832 — had closed he was elected Vice President, and four years later he became President of the United States.

Irving also returned to his native land and made his home near Sleepy Hollow on the Hudson. Here he grew old, dying in 1859, and here he was buried.

#### A SAD ENDING TO AN EXCURSION PARTY

Martin Van Buren, as we have noticed, succeeded Jackson as President of the United States; but he was defeated in 1840 by the candidate of the Whig party, William Henry Harrison. The Whigs were greatly elated over their victory, but their joy was short. Mr. Harrison died exactly a month after his inauguration. John Tyler, who had been elected Vice President, now became President. But we must get to our story.

It was February 28, 1844. There was a new Government vessel, the *Princeton*, lying in the Potomac below the capital. The captain was Commodore Stockton and he was very

proud of his ship. He invited about a hundred people to take an excursion with him down the river, and among the guests were President Tyler, the members of his Cabinet and their families, and several senators and representatives.

A gay company it was, shouting and laughing as they steamed down the river. There was a great gun on board, called the Peacemaker, throwing a 225-pound shell, and this gun was fired several times as the vessel glided through the water. There were on board Mr. Gardiner, of Virginia, and his daughter, to whom President Tyler (now a widower) was engaged to be married; also the aged Mrs. Dolly Madison, whom all America delighted to honor.

As they were returning up the river, toward evening, and after they had partaken of a repast, the guests were invited to come on deck and witness one more salute to be fired from the Peacemaker. All came hurrying up and a crowd was soon gathered about the huge cannon. There was a long stretch of the river below and the people looked to see the ball skim the surface of the water. All was ready; the match was applied. There was a deafening roar. The gun had burst and nearly a dozen people lay dead and many more wounded on the deck. All on the left side of the gun were killed or maimed, as it had exploded on that side. Those on the right and in the rear were knocked senseless, but recovered.

President Tyler had been called away a moment before the explosion and thus he escaped; but Mr. Gardiner, the father of his betrothed, was among the dead. Two members of the Cabinet, Mr. Upshur, Secretary of State, and Mr. Gilmer, Secretary of the Navy, were killed. Senator Benton, who had stood behind the gun, was unconscious for some time, but was not seriously injured.

## MORSE AND THE TELEGRAPH

One of the greatest of human inventions is the electric telegraph, and the name of Samuel F. B. Morse will ever be connected with it. A hundred years ago it required a month or more for news to cross the Atlantic Ocean; now it requires but a moment. The overthrow of Napoleon at Waterloo occurred on June 18, 1815, and the fact was not known in America till late in July or the first of August. The crowning of King Edward VII took place on August 9, 1902, and the fact was printed in American newspapers within the same hour. All this from the telegraph.

Professor Morse was born in Massachusetts, in 1791. After graduating at Yale in 1810 he went to England to study art. He became famous as an artist and was elected Professor of the Art of Design in the University of the City of New York. He also became interested in electricity, and the idea of the telegraph came to him while crossing the Atlantic in 1832. Two or three years later he had telegraph wires in a room in the university and the results were conclusive proof that the invention was successful. Morse then applied for a patent and also applied to Congress for a grant of money to build an experimental line from Washington to Baltimore; but nothing was done for him at the time. He then went to Europe and tried to interest foreign governments, but had no success. Morse was now reduced almost to his last dollar and again he came to Congress for assistance. He had been granted the privilege to set up a line in the lower rooms of the Capitol and the members of Congress could hardly believe their senses when they were enabled to converse with one another from the different rooms. And yet when a bill came up to grant the inventor \$30,000 there was much opposition, and many were the



shafts of ridicule aimed at him. One member moved that an appropriation be made to construct a railroad to the moon. Another declared that all magnetic telegraphs were miserable chimeras, fit for nothing.

During this debate Morse stood leaning against the railing in great agitation. To a friend he said, placing his hand on his head: "I have an awful headache — I have spent seven years and all I had perfecting this invention. If the bill fails I am ruined — I have not money enough to pay my board bill."

The bill was laid over till the last day of the session and there were more than a hundred other bills to be considered that day. Morse gave up hope and went to his room. Next morning, deeply depressed in spirits, he was about to start for New York when he heard that the bill to grant him \$30,000 to establish a telegraph line to Baltimore had passed Congress about midnight. We can only imagine the feelings of Professor Morse at this great news. His fortune was made. Now he could show the world what he had done.

This was in 1843. The line to Baltimore was finished by the next year. When the telegraph was ready for use, Professor Morse asked Miss Ellsworth, a young daughter of the commissioner of patents, to name the first sentence to be transmitted. She chose a sentence from the Bible, "What hath God wrought!" And who could suggest a more appropriate one? Few human inventions seem more the work of the Divine Hand than the telegraph.

At the time when the line was finished the Democratic convention was in session in Baltimore and the first practical message ever sent by telegraph was the news that James K. Polk had been nominated for the Presidency.

Everybody was soon convinced that the telegraph was a thing of immeasurable usefulness. Morse became the hero

of the hour. He had done the world a service that can never be forgotten and his name is placed among the immortals. He lived to be old — lived to see his invention in use in every civilized land, to see the Old and New Worlds connected by cable laid on the bottom of the sea. He lived to enjoy the unbounded gratitude of his countrymen and to receive special honors from almost every monarch in Europe.

#### THE CREOLE AFFAIR

The *Creole* was a slave ship, plying between Norfolk, Virginia, and New Orleans. She left Norfolk in November, 1841, with 135 slaves on board. One of them was a mulatto named Madison Washington. He had some time before run away from his master in Virginia, had crossed the Northern States by means of the "Underground Railroad," and taken up his abode in Canada, where the laws of England made him free.<sup>1</sup>

But Washington was very unhappy in Canada because he had left his wife in slavery. At length he determined to find his way back to Virginia, to rescue his wife and take her with him to Canada. It was a dangerous thing to attempt, for if he were caught he would certainly be sold to some trader and taken to the far South, from which he could never hope to return. This was usually the punishment for a slave who attempted to escape or to aid in the escape of others. Washington knew this, but he was so disconsolate without his life companion that he dared to make the long journey to attempt her rescue.

His worst fears were realized. He was recognized and seized and sold to the far South.

The brig *Creole* was about to start with its human cargo

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. XX.

on a long voyage to New Orleans. Madison was one of the slaves on board when the vessel left Norfolk. In deepest dejection he brooded over his bitter fate and thought he would rather die than wear his life out on one of the great plantations, under the lash of the overseer, and never see his friends again. Then in desperation he conceived a plot to conspire with some of his fellow slaves to kill the masters of the vessel, to seize the brig and steer for the coast of Africa.

They had been some days at sea and were nearing the Bahama Islands. Washington had eighteen of the slaves in his plot, and one night, armed with knives and handspikes, the nineteen rose in mutiny, rushed to the cabin where the officers, their wives, and children were asleep, and began their murderous work. One of the slave owners was killed and the captain of the brig was severely wounded, but most of them escaped with little or no injury.

The blacks soon had control of the vessel, and they told the wounded captain that they would spare him, his wife, and his children, if he would steer for Liberia, on the coast of Africa. He agreed to do whatever they asked, but convinced them that there was not enough food and water on board to take them halfway across the ocean. He was then ordered to steer for a British port in the West Indies. He did so, and a day or two later they landed at the town of Nassau.

Here they were in the hands of British authorities and on British soil, and a law of England was that any slave who sets foot on British soil is from that moment free. All but the nineteen mutineers were therefore given their freedom, but the nineteen were held for further consideration. The American authorities demanded that they be sent to the United States to be tried for murder and mutiny, but the

British officials refused to give them up until they could get orders from London. This required some time, and meantime Daniel Webster, who was then Secretary of State, wrote to London demanding that the men be given up.

The British Government considered the matter and decided that, as no treaty between the two nations covered this ground and as a slave had a right to kill his master to obtain his own freedom, the men should not be given up. Whereupon the nineteen mutineers were also given their liberty.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE

ONE of the most momentous legislative acts in the history of America is that known as the Missouri Compromise. From this point, it may be said, the great agitation between the North and the South on the slavery question took its rise; thenceforth it continued to be the dominant public question for more than forty years, culminating at last in the great Civil War. It is fitting here to give a brief account of slavery in America up to that time.

#### SLAVERY DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD

The enslavement of man by his fellow-man was almost universal among ancient peoples. The system in most countries gradually merged into the serfdom of the Middle Ages, and eventually disappeared, after being greatly ameliorated by the influence of Christianity. In ancient times slavery was usually the result of conquest in war. The enslavement of the African race on commercial grounds had its beginning in comparatively modern times.

Slavery in the English colonies of North America dates back to within twelve years of the founding of the first colony, Virginia; but it had existed in Central America and in South America for more than a century before that, and in southern Europe for about fifty years before the discovery of the New World by Columbus. Not long after the introduction of slavery into the colonies, the traffic in slaves became quite profitable and was chiefly carried on by



English traders. England was responsible, above all other countries, for slavery in the United States. At different times the colonies attempted to suppress the slave trade, but the British Government thwarted them at every turn—simply because it was a profitable means of commerce.

As early as 1712 Pennsylvania passed an act to restrict the increase of slaves, but it was annulled by the Crown.<sup>1</sup> Fourteen years later Virginia attempted to check the trade by laying a tax on imported negroes, but the colony was soon forced to repeal the law. South Carolina attempted to restrict the trade in 1761, and Massachusetts made a similar attempt ten years later. In each case the effort was summarily crushed by the British Crown. The traffic was a source of much profit to England, and she would listen to no promptings of humanity in the matter. There had been founded in England, more than a century before the Revolution, the Royal African Company, a great monopoly, which furnished slaves for all the British colonies throughout the world. Queen Anne owned one-fourth of the stock in this company during her reign, and she especially enjoined Parliament to suffer no interference with the slave trade.

Thus England, while not permitting slavery on her home soil, not only encouraged, but enforced it, in her colonies. But the mother country was not alone to blame for the increase of the traffic in North America. The colonists purchased the slaves; if they had not, the traffic would have died out. Virginians made the first settlement in North Carolina, and took their slaves with them. Sir John Yeamans introduced them into South Carolina from the Barbadoes, and from South Carolina they were carried into Georgia.

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power*, Vol. I, p. 4.

The Society of Friends, or Quakers, took the lead in opposing slavery, beginning about 1688. The German Lutherans of Pennsylvania also entered their protest against the evil at an early date. John Wesley called slavery the sum of all villainies. At the time of the Revolution all the colonies but one, Massachusetts, had slaves. The Continental Congress of 1774 pronounced against the slave trade. This was repeated two years later, only three months before the Declaration of Independence. The people were so jubilant over their own prospects of freedom that they were disposed to extend the blessings of liberty to their slaves; but this feeling was temporary with many and subsided after the war was over. Jefferson in writing the Declaration of Independence put in a clause condemning the slave trade, but South Carolina and Georgia demanded that it be struck out, and this was done. But they could not prevent that grand sentiment in the Declaration: "All men are created equal"—not equal in mental gifts nor in worldly station, but equal in their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. If the colonists had followed out that noble principle, it would have freed every slave in America; and indeed it did furnish a powerful weapon in the hands of the opponents of slavery down to its overthrow in the sixties.

Soon after the Revolution the northern states took hold of the matter and began to emancipate—Pennsylvania leading in 1780. Virginia came very near it two years before. New Hampshire became a free state in 1784, New York in 1799, and so on until all the northern states had abolished slavery. New Jersey had a few slaves left as late as 1850.

In 1787 an ordinance was framed for governing the territory northwest of the Ohio River (afterward Ohio, Indiana,

Illinois, and Michigan). In this document, known as "The Ordinance of 1787," slavery was forever prohibited in that territory. Had it not been for this prohibition Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois would no doubt have become slave states, as they were largely settled by emigrants from Virginia and Kentucky.<sup>1</sup> Even then efforts were made by Governor William Henry Harrison and others to break down that ordinance and to make Indiana and Illinois slave states; but they were not successful.

In 1784 Jefferson introduced in the old Congress a similar ordinance to prohibit slavery in the new states south of the Ohio (afterward Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, etc.). Had this motion carried and been effective, there might have been far-reaching results. Slavery would have been confined to the few Atlantic states in the South, and would no doubt have died a natural death. Thus would have been prevented the seventy years of slavery agitation and the great Civil War. But the measure was lost by one vote.<sup>2</sup> A member from New Jersey who would have voted for it was absent, and for want of his vote the measure was lost. Thus the entire course of our history was changed by the absence of one man from Congress on a certain day in 1784!

Here let me say a word about the slave trade, especially the smuggling trade. This was certainly one of the most nefarious occupations ever carried on. A vessel would go to the African coast and secure a cargo of negroes, by purchase of the so-called "kings," or by kidnapping. They were packed in the ship almost like sardines in a box, and so inhuman was the treatment that sometimes thirty per cent of them died before reaching America. A smuggling vessel, pursued, would sometimes throw its entire cargo of negroes

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, Vol. I, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Greeley, *American Conflict*, Vol. I, p. 163.

overboard! This occurred on various occasions. But when a smuggling ship was caught, it seldom brought relief to the poor blacks, as the laws were persistently against them, and often a whole cargo of negroes was sold to pay the cost of investigation. There was always a way found to enslave the black man: sending him back to his home in Africa or giving him his freedom in this country was almost unheard of. A committee of Congress recommended that a free colored man on trial and proving himself free must pay the cost of the trial, and if unable to do so must be sold into slavery to defray the expenses! But fortunately the proposal did not become a law.

#### SLAVERY UNDER THE CONSTITUTION

A majority of the makers of the Constitution would gladly have seen slavery abolished in all parts of the country where it still existed; but some of the southern states had come to believe that slavery was necessary to their prosperity. It was plain that no Union could be formed if the Constitution were so framed as to interfere with the right to hold property in slaves. Not only did the Constitution recognize the right of property in slaves; it forbade Congress to prohibit the foreign slave trade before the year 1808.<sup>1</sup>

In 1806 President Jefferson congratulated Congress on the near approach of the time when the traffic could be shut off. Accordingly when the time came Congress prohibited the African trade under stringent laws. It is only fair to the South to say that the southern states had prohibited the trade, each in its own borders, long before. South Carolina, however, had reopened it in 1803, and in the five remaining years imported about forty thousand negroes.

<sup>1</sup>See Chap. V.

The people in the North and many in the South now fondly believed that this national prohibition of 1808 had severed the artery of slavery itself, and that the whole system would disappear in time in the South as it had in the North. They were therefore lulled to quiet on the subject, and there was little slavery agitation for ten years. But their hope was a delusion. The cotton gin, which rendered the laborious work of separating the cotton fiber from the seed rapid and easy, made the raising of cotton one of the greatest industries in America, and slave labor was thought to be essential to its continuance. More slaves were needed, but they could not be had from Africa except by smuggling. The new cotton states opening up along the Mississippi were greatly in need of more slaves, while Virginia had too many. Hence the interstate slave trade was established.

The Louisiana Purchase added a vast territory beyond the Mississippi to our public domain. Soon after the War of 1812, this territory began to be settled, and the great question now arose — slavery or no slavery in the great West? Missouri being the first of the trans-Mississippi territories to apply for statehood, became the battle-ground. But the slaveholders stole a march by settling in the Missouri Territory and taking their slaves with them. When the petition, therefore, came to the Fifteenth Congress that Missouri be admitted into the Union, it was as a slave state.

It was believed that there would be little objection, but the majority of the people of the North were becoming alarmed at the powerful hold with which slavery was fastening itself upon the country. It was clearly seen that slavery admitted into Missouri without protest meant slavery in the whole Louisiana Purchase. It must be opposed. Who would lead the opposition?



There was a young man in Congress from New York named James Talmadge. This was his first and only term in Congress. He it was that rose and moved to strike out the slavery clause from the Missouri bill. He was a youth of burning eloquence, and in the speech with which he supported his motion he electrified the House and the nation.<sup>1</sup> Old men were reminded of the wonderful eloquence of Fisher Ames in 1796. Talmadge was not alone: he had a powerful fellow-worker in John W. Taylor, also of New York and afterward speaker of the House. The whole South was instantly arrayed on the opposite side. During this debate, a slave driver with a gang of negroes passed the open windows of the Capitol, and the clank of chains, the crack of the whip, and the oaths of the driver gave great effect to the speeches in favor of freedom. These two, Talmadge and Taylor, piloted the amendment through the House, but it was defeated in the Senate and left over to the next Congress.

The question was thus thrown open to the public; but the people were not in a position to act at an advantage, as the election of the new Congress had already taken place. Nevertheless they made themselves heard. The people of the North had grown listless on the slavery subject in the belief that the status of the institution was settled, and that no attempt would be made to increase the number of slave states. But the Missouri question roused them from their lethargy. Great meetings were held in the cities, towns, villages, everywhere. Resolutions were passed branding slavery as a moral and political evil, avowing that it should encroach no farther on free soil, and calling on Congress to prohibit it in Missouri. State legislatures passed similar resolutions; and the subject was discussed in public speeches, sermons, pamphlets, and newspapers on all sides.

<sup>1</sup> Schouler, Vol. III, p. 134.

From south of Mason and Dixon's line we hear a different voice. The people of the South took the other side of the question, and spoke with a decision equal to that of the North. They said that Congress had no right to prohibit slavery in any state, that Missouri would not stand on equal footing with the other states if not allowed to manage her own affairs. They argued further that if slavery was an evil, why not thin it out by spreading it over more territory?

The two sections, the North and the South, had thus begun to array themselves on opposite sides. It is true the beginnings of their differences date back to Revolutionary times, but they assumed serious proportions only with the rise of the Missouri question; yet none could foretell that this was but the preliminary skirmish of a long and dreadful conflict that must eventually drench the land in blood.

#### THE SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

The Sixteenth Congress stands out as a landmark in our history on account of its one great measure — the Missouri Compromise. The first session of this Congress began in December, 1819, and the great question at once came up for a final solution. The preceding Congress had grappled with the subject, as we have noticed, but the two Houses had failed to agree, and the new Congress was also divided. Talmadge was not now a member, and Taylor became the champion for free Missouri. The debates, covering several months, were very able in both House and Senate. With much ability Taylor piloted through the House a motion to prohibit slavery in Missouri. The leaders of the other side were Henry Clay, the speaker, Charles Pinckney, a framer of the Constitution, John Tyler, a future President, and William Lowndes, one of the most brilliant men of the South.

Again the Missouri Bill was sent to the Senate, with the clause admitting slavery struck out. Here the debates even surpassed those of the House. The leader on the slave side was William Pinkney of Maryland, said to have been the greatest lawyer in America — a distinction afterward held by Daniel Webster. Pinkney's speech on the subject was one of the greatest ever made in the Senate. It was answered by Rufus King of New York, the venerable statesman whose public career dated back to the Revolution.

Now the Senate was balanced and had been from the beginning of the Government, half from slave states and half from free states; but there were a few "northern men with southern principles," as they were called, who were ever ready to help the slaveholders. At this time there were three, one from Indiana and the two from Illinois, who could be counted on to aid the South when needed. When the bill, therefore, to admit Missouri passed the Senate, the amendment to prohibit slavery was again struck out; and the House again voted to disagree. Thus the two Houses had reached a deadlock, and it seemed that nothing could be done.

It happened at this time that Maine was also seeking admission to the Union. The territory of Maine had belonged to Massachusetts from colonial times. After many fruitless efforts by Maine to obtain a separation from Massachusetts, the latter had at last given her consent, on the condition, however, that Maine be admitted to the Union before the fourth of March, 1820. The time limit was drawing near, and the people of Maine were clamoring for admission; but the Missouri question was still unsettled, and this was absorbing the whole attention.

The Senate now adopted a new plan; it united the Missouri and Maine bills into one. It is a principle in our national

legislation that a bill, however incongruous its parts, cannot be separated by one House of Congress after it leaves the other, nor by the President after being passed by both. Thus the House could not admit Maine into the union without admitting Missouri also, with slavery. Before this twofold measure left the Senate, however, Senator Thomas of Illinois, who had steadily voted with the South, moved that slavery be henceforth prohibited in the Louisiana Purchase north of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes north latitude — except, of course, in Missouri, which lies north of that line. This was the famous Missouri Compromise. It was thrown as a bait to the North in the hope that the House would thus be led to pass the measure and admit Missouri with slavery.

Late in February this Maine-Missouri bill was sent to the House; but that body refused to consider it. The Senate then asked for a conference, and a joint committee of the two Houses was appointed. Speaker Clay was careful to appoint men from the House who favored slavery in Missouri; and this committee soon agreed to report the measure as it had passed the Senate, including the “thirty-six-thirty” amendment of Senator Thomas.

The Lower House had been gradually weakening, but it was still hard to yield. It did so, however, and the bill was passed, signed by President Monroe, and became law on March 3, 1820. The members from the North who voted for the bill were called “Doughfaces” by John Randolph, and this term was used for many years thereafter to designate a “northern man with southern principles.”

Missouri, however, was not finally admitted to the Union at this time, owing to the fact that her people in framing a constitution forbade free negroes on her soil, and also forbade any future legislature to pass any law emancipating slaves

without the consent of the owners. To this Congress refused to agree, the old strife was renewed and kept up for another year, when the state was at last admitted on the condition that the obnoxious features be expunged from her constitution.

The Missouri Compromise was a partial victory for the South. The North had grown weary of the long strife that promised no victory, and had yielded, partly because of the difficulty that would have been involved in removing the slaves already in Missouri. The South had secured Missouri as a slave state; but it had lost one very important point. After long contending that Congress had no power to prohibit slavery in any territory, it gave up that point in agreeing to the compromise.

This compromise has often been called Clay's Compromise; but there is no warrant for this, and Clay himself often wondered why he should be considered its author. It is true Clay favored settling the matter in this way, and he appointed the House committee that made the report; but he was not more instrumental than some others in bringing about the final result. The Missouri Compromise was born with great tribulation; but it brought peace to the land on the slavery subject for several years. It remained unbroken for thirty-four years, when it was repealed by the Kansas-Nebraska Bill of Stephen A. Douglas. This will be treated in a later chapter.



## CHAPTER XIV

### X THE MONROE DOCTRINE

JAMES MONROE was President of the United States from 1817 to 1825. He has been called the last and least of the great Virginians. His administration is remembered in our history as the "era of good feeling," as, in a century of political storm, the one period of calm in which party lines were obliterated. Monroe also holds the distinction of having been the only President except Washington whose election was practically unanimous.<sup>1</sup>

As a statesman, President Monroe must be ranked below all his predecessors and many of his successors in the presidential office; yet it is true that his name is known more familiarly to-day in foreign countries than that of any other of our early Presidents except the name of Washington. This is because of the fact that his name is inseparably linked with the famous principle in our foreign policy known as the Monroe Doctrine.

#### HOW THIS DOCTRINE ORIGINATED

The Monroe Doctrine has its root in Washington's "Farewell Address" of a quarter of a century before the declaration by Monroe; and indeed the germs of it may be found in his "Proclamation of Neutrality" of a still earlier

<sup>1</sup> In the election of 1816 Monroe received one hundred and eighty-three electoral votes to thirty-four for Rufus King. In 1820 all the electors voted for Monroe save one, a Mr. Plumer of New Hampshire, who voted for John Quincy Adams on the ground, as he said, that Washington alone should bear the honor of a unanimous election.

date. In the "Farewell Address," Washington urged that America stand aloof from the political broils of Europe. A few years later, Jefferson, in his first inaugural address, warned against "entangling alliances" with foreign nations. This attitude of non-interference in matters wholly European expanded until it included a determination to oppose all European interference in affairs wholly American. This doctrine had become a settled policy in the public mind and needed only an occasion to call forth a declaration of it from the highest authority. This occasion arose in 1823, when, in his annual message to Congress (December 2), President Monroe gave utterance to the "doctrine" that has since been called by his name.

It is generally asserted that the "Holy Alliance" was formed in Europe for the purpose of assisting Spain to reduce her rebellious South American colonies to submission; but, the fact is, this alliance was simply a joint resolution of the sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia to rule their respective countries in strict accordance with the principles of the Christian religion. It was an outburst of religious enthusiasm occasioned by the fall of Napoleon at Waterloo, and there is no proof that any ulterior motives entered into the agreement.<sup>1</sup>

It was these same three powers, however, that met in conference at Verona in October, 1822, to consider plans to put down an insurrection in Spain and it was suggested that they also aid that country in reducing the South American republics. They had met two years before for the purpose of crushing out the spirit of freedom in Naples, and an Austrian army had succeeded in doing so. Now they turned their attention to Spain. England was represented at this Verona conference, and she entered her earnest

<sup>1</sup> See McMaster, *With the Fathers*, p. 2.

protest against any interference in South America. Two reasons may be given for this stand taken by England — first, she was beyond a doubt farther advanced in her ideas of liberty and of human rights than were the continental countries, and, second, she had important commercial interests with the South American Republics which she desired should not be disturbed.

The power of Spain had been greatly reduced by Napoleon I, and she was no longer able to govern her colonies. These colonies in the Western World, except Cuba, had revolted against the mother-country and after a revolutionary war of more than ten years were in 1822 recognized as independent republics by our own country. Before the close of that year the Verona Congress met, and the three monarchs who had entered into the Holy Alliance, ever vigilant to uphold absolutism as against natural human rights and liberties, proposed to aid Spain in subjugating her western possessions.

In August, 1823, Mr. George Canning, the English minister of foreign affairs, proposed to Mr. Richard Rush, our minister at the Court of St. James, that Great Britain and the United States issue a joint declaration in opposition to the designs of the allied powers. Mr. Rush fully agreed with Canning that something should be done to save the new republics from reënslavement, but he had no instructions to act. He wrote a full account of the whole matter to President Monroe, who, after careful deliberation, and after asking the opinions and receiving the written approval of both Jefferson and Madison, decided to embody the general public sentiment on the subject in his message to Congress, which was soon to meet. Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, however, declared that we should act alone and not in conjunction with England. His opinion prevailed, and

he was the author of that part of Monroe's message. In the message we find these words:

In the wars of the European Powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. . . . We owe it, therefore, to candor, and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those Powers, to declare that *we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.* With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not interfered and shall not interfere; but with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European Power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.

This is the famous Monroe Doctrine. Its secondary immediate object was to stop the colonizing of the Pacific coast by Russia, which had been going on for some time.

When this message was promulgated, the English people rejoiced; but their joy was mild compared with that in South America. No more was heard of the "unholy" alliance in Europe. From that day to the present the free republics of South and Central America have basked in the favor, and lived under the protection from foreign conquest of the Great Republic of the North; and but for that protection most or all of them would no doubt ere this have been reduced to the vassalage of some European Power. South and Central America would have shared the fate of Africa.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE MONROE DOCTRINE IN OPERATION

Since the declaration of President Monroe in 1823, there have been many occasions on which this American

<sup>1</sup> While such possession of Latin America might have been a certain menace to us, it does not follow that civilization in this hemisphere would have been retarded. Africa is immeasurably more advanced than it would be if Europe had kept its hands off.

policy has been called into service, a few of which we shall briefly notice.

The earliest opportunity for an international discussion of the Monroe Doctrine was offered through the Panama Congress, which met in 1826. This congress was arranged by Mexico and the countries of South America, and one of its objects was to form an alliance to carry the new doctrine into effect when any occasion might arise. The United States was warmly invited to join with them. John Quincy Adams, who was then President, and Henry Clay, his Secretary of State, agreed that our Government should be represented, and Mr. Adams sent a message to the Senate, urging that ministers be appointed for the purpose. But there was much opposition to this in the Senate, not because the members disapproved of the Monroe Doctrine, but rather because Mr. Adams was not popular in that body; and besides, the Panama Congress proposed to discuss some things (such as the recognition of the negro republic of Hayti and the suppression of the slave trade) which would be offensive to the southern states. The Senate, therefore, disputed about the matter so long that when two ministers were finally appointed, it was so late that on reaching Panama they found that the Congress had adjourned.

Nearly twenty years later the Monroe Doctrine was prominently called into service in settling the Oregon boundary. In 1845, President Polk, in his message to Congress concerning this disputed boundary, made reference to the doctrine in these words: "In the existing circumstances . . . the present is deemed a proper occasion to reiterate and reaffirm the principle avowed by Mr. Monroe, and to state my cordial concurrence in its wisdom and sound policy."

Three years later another occasion of very different character arose. The peninsula of Yucatan had been



greatly disturbed by a war between the white people and the Indians. The white population at length appealed to England, Spain, and the United States for protection, and offered "the dominion and sovereignty" of the peninsula to any one of the three that would grant the necessary aid. President Polk, without waiting the action of either of the European nations, made a direct application of the Monroe Doctrine, quoting Mr. Monroe's exact words. This was certainly applying the doctrine in the broadest possible sense. No European nation was making an effort to colonize or extend its political system in the New World. On the other hand, an oppressed people, struggling for existence, had called on two of them for help.<sup>1</sup> Yet Polk made a direct application of the declaration of President Monroe. It is notable that in the debate in the Senate which followed, John C. Calhoun, the only surviving member of Monroe's cabinet, took strong ground against the general application of the Monroe Doctrine. Before any action was taken the people of Yucatan settled their troubles, and the whole matter came to an end.

To trace the application of the Monroe Doctrine in its bearing on the proposed canal across the Isthmus of Panama or Nicaragua, would require far more space than can be given it here. We can only make a few general statements. As early as 1846 the United States Government made a treaty with New Granada (now the United States of Colombia), in which the latter granted the United States the right of way across the Isthmus of Panama. Three years later the republic of Nicaragua granted us a similar right to construct a canal across that country. Another treaty soon followed, that known as the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, arranged in April, 1850, by Mr. Clayton, Secretary of State

<sup>1</sup> McMaster, *With the Fathers*, p. 32.

under President Taylor, and Sir Henry Bulwer, representing Great Britain. The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was brought about by the English claims to the Mosquito Coast of Nicaragua. It provided that neither government "will ever obtain or maintain for itself any exclusive control over the proposed ship canal" across Nicaragua, nor colonize nor exercise dominion over any part of Central America. Soon after the treaty was ratified, a dispute arose over its provisions, and this delayed for several years any commencement of the great project. Then came the American Civil War and its train of difficulties, and nearly twenty years more elapsed before anything was done.

In 1879 Ferdinand de Lesseps of France organized a company for the construction of a canal across Panama; but this called forth a declaration from our Congress of the Monroe Doctrine. This was repeated in substance by President Garfield, in his inaugural address, and soon after by Mr. Blaine, the Secretary of State.

Before the close of the year 1881, the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was again under discussion; and Mr. Blaine plainly informed the British Government that this country could no longer be bound by the provisions of that treaty, because the conditions that called it forth were temporary in their nature and because the development of the Pacific coast had vastly increased the interest of the United States and greatly changed the relative interest between this country and Great Britain.<sup>1</sup>

#### CUBA AND MEXICO

Within two years after the first promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine it was applied in the case of Cuba. In 1825 a French fleet appeared among the West India Islands, and

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II, Chap. XVI.

it was believed that France had designs on Cuba; whereupon Henry Clay, the Secretary of State, immediately wrote our minister at Paris that, while the United States was not disposed to interfere with the Spanish possession of the island, under no consideration could we permit any other nation to gain control of it. The French government disavowed any intention of such an object and practically concurred with Mr. Clay's views concerning the possession of the island.

President Polk in 1848 directed our minister at Madrid to ascertain if Spain would sell the island; but the reply received was that the people of Spain, rather than see the island transferred to any other nation, would prefer to see it sunk into the ocean.

In 1850 an adventurer named Narcisco Lopez fitted out an expedition in the United States for the purpose of attacking Cuba. He landed on the island, but was disappointed in his belief that the Cubans would join his standard and make an effort to wrest the island from Spanish dominion. Lopez was soon driven off and the next year, when engaged in a similar expedition with a following of about five hundred men, he was overpowered and captured with his entire force. Most of the leaders were put to death, Lopez himself being garroted in the public square of Havana. It was afterward found that Lopez had been abetted and furnished money by some of the leading men of the South, the object being to annex Cuba to this country for the purpose of increasing slave territory. This brought forth the proposal by England and France of a tripartite agreement that neither of those countries nor the United States should ever take possession of Cuba. But this was declined by the United States on the ground that Cuba lies right at our doors, commands the approach to the Gulf of Mexico, and that the United States

in signing such an agreement would be sacrificing a great deal more than either of the other countries; and besides, such an agreement would be entering into a political alliance contrary to American practice.

Next followed a declaration known as the Ostend Manifesto. This was made by our three ministers<sup>1</sup> at London, Paris, and Madrid, respectively. They met at Ostend, Belgium, and in the declaration put forth they stated that Cuba should by all means come into the possession of the United States. The ten years' war in Cuba, 1868-1878, and the later revolt against the mother-country, beginning in February, 1895, and resulting in the intervention by the United States and our consequent war with Spain, do not come under a discussion of the Monroe Doctrine.

The political turmoil in Mexico during the past hundred years has been greater even than that of Cuba. The continuous strife between the Liberal Party and the Church Party has given rise to a great many changes of government. In 1860, three European countries—Great Britain, France, and Spain—decided on armed intervention in Mexico. President Buchanan in his last annual message protested against this, and recommended the employment of a military force to prevent it. But the Civil War broke out, and America had enough to engage its full attention for several years. Meantime the three powers proceeded to land an army in Mexico;<sup>2</sup> but first they signed an agreement not to acquire any territory for themselves, nor to dictate any form of government for Mexico; their only object, they said, was to enforce payment of their just claims upon that country. Scarcely, however, had the armies landed when it was discovered that the object of Napoleon III, Emperor of

<sup>1</sup> James Buchanan, John Y. Mason, and Pierre Soulé.

<sup>2</sup> For fuller account, see Vol. II, Chap. VI.

France, was, in violation of the agreement, to establish an empire in Mexico and to seat the Austrian Prince Maximilian on the throne. England and Spain withdrew, and France was left to make the conquest alone. Europe rejoiced at what was supposed to be the downfall of the Monroe Doctrine. The English Government, which had now come to hate that doctrine, joined in the rejoicing. Napoleon was congratulated for doing a great service for the world. The *Westminster Review* said: "The occupation of Mexico is the extinction of the Monroe Doctrine. That doctrine, it must be owned, is both absurd and arrogant in theory and practice."

But they reckoned without their host. The American Civil War came to an end, and the United States Government had no thought of abandoning the principle laid down by Monroe. During the war Napoleon had sought to have his new empire recognized by this country, but Secretary Seward informed him in the name of President Lincoln that this country favored a republican form of government in Mexico, and that, if France ignored that American sentiment, she would but prepare the way for a collision between that country and the United States. Still Napoleon refused to understand, and in the summer of 1865, soon after the surrender of Lee at Appomattox, the President sent General Sheridan to the banks of the Rio Grande with fifty thousand veteran troops. Thus for the first time the Monroe Doctrine was backed up with an army. Such an argument was quite convincing to Napoleon. The result was that the French troops were all withdrawn within a year.

But the foolish Maximilian still clung to his newly acquired throne. He was now without an army, without protection, and he had not won the hearts of his new subjects. The Mexicans soon rose against him, overpowered,



and took him captive. He was condemned by a court-martial, and was shot to death in 1867. It is needless to say that since then no European power has attempted the conquest of Mexico.

#### VENEZUELA

The application in 1895 of the Monroe Doctrine to the Venezuelan boundary dispute was one of the most notable in its history. Never before had its application caused such a profound sensation throughout the world. Never before were the Powers of Europe so thoroughly, so suddenly convinced that the old doctrine was a living thing, and that the determination of the American people was to stand by it at all hazards.

The boundary dispute between Venezuela and British Guiana had been pending for more than half a century. In 1840 a botanist and surveyor named Schomburgk, in the service of the British Government, made a survey of the valley of the Essequibo River and claimed the entire basin of the river for England. Against this Schomburgk line, as it was called, Venezuela made an earnest protest. A few years later Lord Aberdeen consented to a new boundary line less pretentious than the former; and in 1850 the two countries agreed not to occupy nor encroach upon the disputed territory. For many years after this agreement had been made the boundary dispute was left to slumber. In 1876 the subject was again brought up, and Venezuela offered to accept a compromise line; but the British Government now took the ground that the disputed territory belonged to that country alone "by virtue of ancient treaties with the native races." These "native races" are supposed to have been Indian tribes which had no right to make any such treaties; and furthermore, England had not owned the

colony previous to 1814, when it was received from Holland. How then could there be "ancient treaties" brought forth to settle the dispute? Venezuela now offered to accept the line offered by Lord Aberdeen in 1844, but England claimed that so many British subjects had settled in the disputed territory that it was impossible to deprive them of the benefits of British rule. Great Britain betrayed the weakness of her claim by refusing Venezuela's offer to leave the whole matter to arbitration. All diplomatic relations were broken off between the two countries in 1887, and such was the state of affairs when in 1895 the United States decided to interfere.

Nothing was plainer than that the English Government, regarding Venezuela too weak to successfully resist, had decided to seize part of the territory claimed by the latter. This was a palpable infraction of the Monroe Doctrine. The territory in dispute comprised one hundred nine thousand square miles — a tract larger than all our New England states combined. Thus matters stood when in 1895 Mr. Richard Olney, Secretary of State under Cleveland, wrote Lord Salisbury through our minister at London that the American Government was unwilling to stand by and see Venezuela despoiled of her territory, that in accordance with the Monroe Doctrine we must insist on arbitration. The reply of Salisbury was a stunning one. He boldly asserted that he did not accept the Monroe Doctrine, that "no statesman, however eminent, and no nation, however powerful, are competent to insert so novel a principle into the code of international law."

This could not be misunderstood. A crisis was at hand, a supreme test of the Monroe Doctrine. America must back down and abandon its principle or make a defiant stand against the British Empire.

Would the two great Anglo-Saxon nations of the world go to war over so trifling a matter as a little boundary dispute in South America? How could the United States justify itself for the vast sacrifice of men and treasure that a war with so great a nation would occasion? Furthermore, the Venezuelans are scarcely capable of self-government, nor are we so nearly related to them as to the English. Why should we take any such stand in the matter?

The fact is there was a principle at stake. Had we yielded in that crisis, we would have thereby abandoned our time-honored Monroe Doctrine. The New World would have thus been reopened to European colonization, and no one could foretell what might have been the final result. It would probably have been the beginning of the end of popular self-government in Central and South America. Our people were almost unanimous in their determination to maintain our cherished doctrine at any cost, and our President was equal to the occasion.

It was on December 17, 1895, that President Cleveland startled the world with his famous message to Congress. In that message the President speaks thus of the Monroe Doctrine: "It was intended to apply to every stage of our national life, and cannot become obsolete while our Republic endures." This was investing the doctrine with a permanence by an authority equal to that which first proclaimed it. A European power was plainly trying to extend her system of government on this continent, and this Monroe had pronounced "dangerous to our peace and safety." Cleveland's message continues: "Having labored faithfully for many years to induce Great Britain to submit this dispute to impartial arbitration, and having been now finally apprised of her refusal to do so, nothing remains but to accept the situation." The President then proposes that a

commission be appointed to ascertain the rightful boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela, and to report the same to Congress. He then continues: "When such report is made and accepted, it will, in my opinion, be the duty of the United States to resist by every means in its power" the willful aggression and appropriation by Great Britain of lands which we have determined of right belong to Venezuela.

This message was unequivocal; none could mistake its meaning. England was startled at its suddenness, its positive tone, and still more at the unanimity of the support given it by the people. It was said in Europe that Great Britain had not received such a shock in a hundred years. Congress forgot its party differences and voted without debate and without division one hundred thousand dollars to defray the expenses of the commission to be appointed. But to the joy of all, the British Government receded from its position, left the disputed boundary to arbitration, and all danger of hostilities soon passed away. It is safe to say that the Monroe Doctrine is now more deeply imbedded in the American heart than ever before, and there is little doubt that it will be a long time before any European power will again attempt to trample it underfoot.

#### REMARKS ON THE MONROE DOCTRINE

The Monroe Doctrine has a twofold object: first, it guards against that which may be "*dangerous to our peace and safety*," namely, European encroachment on American soil; and second, it *protects democratic government* in the Western Hemisphere. This doctrine is not a part of international law, nor has it even been placed upon the statutes in our own country. Three times was the attempt made to have Congress give it legal sanction. In 1824 Henry Clay

sought to have Congress sanction what Monroe had said the year before. Again in 1879, and still again in 1880, similar attempts were made; but in each case, for partisan or other reason, it failed of passage.

An act of Congress, however, would give little additional value to the doctrine. It is the business of Congress to carry out the policies of the people, not to shape them. President Monroe was not the author of the doctrine that bears his name; he simply voiced the sentiment of the people, and the people are supreme in this Government. The Monroe Doctrine is, therefore, not a law; it is a fact, it is a declaration of an attitude, taken by this Government with reference to the relations of European Powers to the republics of this hemisphere.

The question is sometimes asked: What right have we to take such a stand in this matter? Surely as much right as Europe has to maintain the Balance of Power — as much right as the European nations have in setting bounds to the ambitions of one another. The Monroe Doctrine will stand as long as the American people have the power and the inclination to maintain it. One fine thing to be said about the Monroe Doctrine is that it has not thus far cost a drop of blood.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE CAROLINE AFFAIR<sup>1</sup>

To show how an apparently trifling matter may disturb the friendly relations between two great nations, and bring them to the verge of war; to reveal a feature of weakness in our dual system of government, state and national, as regards our foreign relations; and to illustrate that the public mind may be thoroughly agitated over a subject and forget all about it within a few years — no better example can be found than that known in our history as “The Caroline Affair.” Few of our Citizens to-day, if asked about the Caroline Affair, could give any intelligent account of it, and the majority could not even tell what it was; while during the year of 1838, and for several years following, it was one of the most prominent subjects before the American public. It was brought about by an insurrection in Canada, and the dispute it occasioned between the United States and Great Britain became quite serious, and extended over several years.

### THE CANADIAN REBELLION

There had been for many years previous to 1837 serious differences, in both Upper and Lower Canada, between the popular and loyalist parties. In the latter part of that year an open insurrection broke out against the Government, then in the hands of the loyalists, or British party, as

<sup>1</sup> For the facts related in this chapter I am largely indebted to Benton, *Thirty Years' View*.

they were called. The discontent had its origin in the concentration of the Government into the hands of a few great families, the misuse of public funds, and the setting apart of certain tracts of land for the benefit of the clergy. The immediate causes of the uprising were the refusal of the Assembly to appropriate money to pay the public officials and the carrying through the English House of Commons, by Lord John Russell, of a series of resolutions, rejecting the demand for an elective legislative council.

The leader of the revolt in Upper Canada was William Lyon MacKenzie,<sup>1</sup> a Scotchman, an editor of Toronto and first mayor of that city after its name was changed from York. He was a man of much ability, but rash and wanting in tact; he was an intense hater of Toryism in every form. The leader in Lower Canada was Louis J. Papinau, a member of the Assembly from Montreal. Papinau was a man of energy and courage, nor could anyone question his honesty. Neither of these men could be accused of sinister motives nor of selfish ambition. They fully believed that the only remedy for the evils in the Government was an appeal to arms. The insurgents called themselves "patriots," and their avowed object was to break away from English rule and to set up a republic in Canada.

The rebellion found many sympathizers in the United States. All along our northern border from Vermont to Michigan there was great excitement. Men assembled and formed themselves into companies and battalions, and chose officers, intending to march into Canada to aid the patriots.

When President Van Buren became aware of these proceedings, he issued a proclamation commanding all citizens to abstain from taking part in such illegal acts, and threaten-

<sup>1</sup> Grandfather of the present (1927) premier of Canada, William Lyon MacKenzie King.

ing the guilty with the utmost penalty of the law. He stated that, as the United States enjoyed the most friendly relations with Great Britain, our citizens must not disturb those relations by abetting or aiding an insurrection in her colony. The President did still more; he called upon the governors of the border states to assist in suppressing all illegal movements, which they did; he sent General Winfield Scott with a body of troops to the frontier, and he chartered several steamboats on Lake Erie, manned them with soldiers, and set them to guard against all offenders. Nevertheless, a considerable number of Americans succeeded in crossing into Canada and joining the insurgents.

The rebellion was not a great one, and in a few weeks after the first outbreak it was suppressed. Sir John Colborne with an army of regulars appeared against the rebels and, after a few sharp skirmishes in which something over a hundred were killed, succeeded in dispersing them. Many laid down their arms and gave up the struggle; others fled across the border into New York. The discontent in Canada was widespread, it is true, but the revolt failed for want of leadership, neither MacKenzie nor Papinau proving successful as military leaders. The movement would scarcely be remembered in history but for an occurrence that immediately gave it international importance and was henceforth known as the Caroline Affair.

#### DESTRUCTION OF THE CAROLINE

The *Caroline* was a small steamboat on Lake Erie and was owned by a citizen of the United States. She was employed in illegal traffic with the Canadian insurgents on Navy Island. This island, situated in the Niagara River above the falls, had become the rendezvous of a body of rebels, numbering about five hundred, under the leadership

of MacKenzie. They had been beaten and driven from the mainland by the regular troops, and had here taken refuge with a view of collecting materials for another attack upon the enemy. Opposite Navy Island, near Chippewa, Ontario, several thousand Canadian troops were stationed under the command of Colonel MacNab. When it became known to MacNab and his soldiers that the *Caroline* was carrying men and supplies to the rebels on the island, they determined to destroy the vessel.

The night of December 29, 1837, was chosen for the exploit. Colonel MacNab sent Captain Drew with a flotilla of five boats to destroy her. They approached silently under cover of darkness to the shore of Navy Island, where the *Caroline* had been seen during the afternoon; but the boat was not there. Captain Drew was unwilling to give up the project so readily, and without authority from his chief proceeded to cross into American waters in search of the offending steamer. About the hour of midnight the searching party found the little steamer moored to the shore at Fort Schlosser, Grand Island, which is a part of the territory of New York. The officers and crew of the *Caroline* consisted of but ten men, but on that night twenty-three other men, who could not be accommodated at the neighboring inn, had found lodging on board the vessel. Nearly all these were American citizens.

About fifty of the British party, well armed, boarded her without warning to the occupants, most of whom were asleep at the time. The Americans sprung from their berths and grappled with the foe; but the contest was an unequal one, and in a very few minutes the British party had possession of the boat, after having killed one man and wounding several others. The victors now put the Americans ashore, cut the vessel from her moorings, set her on fire, and

sent her burning over the Falls of Niagara. Several of the men who had gone aboard to spend the night were afterward missing, and it was believed that they were still on board the burning steamer when she leaped over the cataract, and that they found a watery grave in the depths of the dashing river.

The news of the destruction of the *Caroline*, an American boat in American waters manned by American sailors, spread with great rapidity. The feelings of the people in the border states were inflamed to the highest degree. Retaliatory expeditions were immediately planned, but the President took measures to repress them. At the same time he sent a message to Congress stating that a hostile invasion had been made into our territory, and an outrage of the most aggravated character had been committed against our citizens. He also informed them that an immediate demand for reparation would be made upon the Government of Great Britain.

The feeling in Congress was scarcely less intense than along the northern border. An act was immediately passed placing large military supplies in the hands of the President, for the protection of the frontier; while his decision to demand redress was unanimously approved.

Scarcely a week had passed after the unfortunate occurrence, when Mr. John Forsyth, the Secretary of State, addressed a letter to the English minister at Washington, in which he referred to the invasion of our territory, destruction of our property, and the assassination of American citizens at a time when it was well known that the President was doing all in his power to prevent our people from giving aid and comfort to the insurgents. The British Government made no reply to President Van Buren's demand.

The destroyers of the *Caroline* disclaimed all intention to



invade American soil; they fully expected to find the vessel at Navy Island, which belonged to Canadian territory, where she had been seen a few hours before. The boat being engaged in furnishing supplies to the rebels, was, according to the rules of war, subject to seizure by the British. It was, therefore, not the act itself, but the place in which it was done, that caused all the trouble. On this ground the English ministry justified the act without assuming the responsibility. Every effort of our minister at London to bring about a settlement was treated, not perhaps with contempt, but with a dignified silence. So matters continued for three years, when, near the close of Van Buren's administration, another event occurred that changed the relative position of the two countries — the United States was put on the defensive, and Great Britain became the aggressor.

#### ARREST AND TRIAL OF MCLEOD

Alexander McLeod was a British subject, a resident of Ontario, a blustering braggart of no importance in his own neighborhood nor elsewhere; yet this man became the cause of the most serious disturbance between two great nations — the United States of America and the British Empire.

Three years had passed since the burning of the *Caroline*. The British Government had made no reparation for the offence and it was still a subject of general discussion among the people; but no one believed that war was likely to result, however the ministry might decide. Alexander McLeod had boasted that he was of the party that had destroyed the *Caroline* and that he had himself killed one of the "Yankees." He appeared on the American side, and repeated his foolish boast, whereupon he was instantly

arrested and clapped into prison on a charge of murder and arson.

The excitement again rose to the highest pitch. The English minister at Washington addressed a letter to the President, calling upon him to take steps for the immediate release of McLeod, taking the ground that the latter if guilty was only acting under authority, and was not personally responsible for what had been done. Mr. Forsyth in a very able paper stated that the crime had been committed on the soil of New York in time of peace between the two countries, that the whole matter of personal responsibility of the perpetrators came under the jurisdiction of that state, nor had our national government, under our dual system, any power to interfere in the matter. He further stated that, if the British Government had assumed the responsibility of destroying the *Caroline*, the United States had not been officially informed of the fact.

This answer of Forsyth plainly exhibits the weak point in our system. Here was a subject of a foreign power indicted for violating the laws of a state in the American Union, and the state has no foreign relations whatever.<sup>1</sup> Great Britain could not, therefore, treat with the State of New York; she must deal with the United States Government alone. But the United States Government has no power, under our Constitution, to take a case at common law out of the hands of a state, nor to interfere in any way with constitutional state laws.

The affair had assumed a serious aspect, and thus it remained in an unsettled condition during the winter of 1840-1841. The official term of Martin Van Buren now drew to a close, and William Henry Harrison became President.

No sooner had the United States Government changed

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. XXIII.

hands, than the English ministry assumed a bolder and more menacing tone. The followers of Van Buren were prompt to assert that England had avoided showing her true colors until the party she feared had gone out of power; but she felt that she could bully the new administration as she chose. Whether the change of administration had anything to do with the matter we are unable to say, but it is a fact that the change of attitude in the British ministry began at about the same time.

On the day of Mr. Harrison's inauguration a rumor gained currency through the capital city that the British Government had assumed the destruction of the *Caroline*. One week later the English minister addressed a communication to Daniel Webster, the new Secretary of State, demanding in the name of her Majesty's Government, and in a threatening manner, the immediate release of McLeod. It was learned soon after that English ships were being sent to Halifax, troops were landing in Canada, and that Lord Palmerston had openly stated in Parliament that the ministry had assumed the act of destroying the *Caroline*. The London newspapers were aflame with threats of war.

The wisdom of the British ministry in waiting for the new administration to come in before assuming its threatening attitude seemed now to be confirmed; for Mr. Webster, in his answer, stated that "the Government of the United States entertains no doubt of the asserted British principle," but that McLeod, being in the hands of the State of New York, was beyond the authority of the Federal Government. This was practically conceding the whole matter. After such a concession from such an authority, the only logical thing for the administration to do was to take the British side, and to use its efforts to effect the release of the prisoner — and that is precisely what it did.

Meantime the trial of McLeod approached. The Administration requested the New York authorities to release him without a trial, for the sake of national peace; but they refused. Every means was now employed by the Washington Government to secure the release of the now famous prisoner. It is said that Mr. Webster exacted a secret promise from Mr. Seward, New York's governor, to pardon McLeod if convicted. The Attorney General of the United States was sent by the President to the scene of the trial at Lockport to use his efforts for acquittal.

The trial was conducted with the utmost fairness before an impartial judge and jury — and how ludicrous it all turned out! It was proved at the trial that McLeod had no part in the destruction of the *Caroline*. His boast was an idle and false one. It was shown that he was drunk that night and had slept at Chippewa; that, on hearing of the exploit next morning, he expressed the wish that he had been with the party. This wish had been changed to the assertion that he had been one of them, and had killed one of the Yankees! Thus the idle boast of a braggart had brought about international disturbance of the most serious nature.

Of course McLeod was acquitted, and the war attitude of Great Britain soon subsided. The claims of the United States against the English Government for indemnity on account of the destruction of the little steamboat were eventually abandoned, and the Caroline Affair, which fills a curious page in American history, was soon dropped from the public mind.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1840

EVERY national political contest is characterized by excitement and commotion among the people; but no other in our history can be compared in unrestrained enthusiasm with that of 1840, when William Henry Harrison was elected to the presidency. This remarkable outburst of feeling was a reaction against the prevailing "hard times" of the years just preceding it.

### THE PANIC OF 1837

During the administration of Martin Van Buren, which was but a continuation of the administration of Jackson, the country had suffered severely from the great industrial depression, known as the "panic of 1837," which left in its trail the wrecks of many fortunes. The Whigs were prompt to blame the whole trouble on the Democrats. This is a custom in American politics — for the party out of power to blame the party in power with everything that goes wrong. Few statesmen have risen above this practice, especially when their own advancement depended on it. In that degree a statesman becomes a demagogue.

We cannot enter on a general discussion of this panic of 1837, but a few words about it will not be out of place. There was no doubt some truth in the claim of the Whigs that the Democrats had brought about the panic. Jackson's stern dealing with the United States Bank and his



subsequent "Specie Circular," probably hastened, though they did not produce, the distressed condition that followed.

The chief cause of the panic was the spirit of wild speculation that had taken possession of the people. The national debt was paid in 1835, and for the first and only time in American history there was no public, national debt. The people seemed to think that they could roll in wealth without limit, and the country was flooded with paper money. Almost every bank in the country issued paper money far beyond its ability to redeem in coin. Prices rose and work was plentiful at high wages. Great manufactories were begun and never finished. The sale of public lands was increased about sevenfold. Towns were laid out in the West that have not been built up to this day. All this was done on a basis of paper money, far below the value of gold and silver. But the crash came, as it always will under such circumstances.

The Whigs made much political capital out of this panic. During Van Buren's term of office they had gained steadily on the Democrats, as shown by the state elections, and it was generally believed that, if they made no serious blunder, they would win in the approaching national contest.

#### THE WHIG CONVENTION

The national convention of the Whigs was held in a newly erected Lutheran church at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in December, 1839, nearly a year before the time of the election. Before this convention were the names of three candidates — Henry Clay, the great Whig leader and founder of the party; William Henry Harrison, the Ohio farmer and hero of Tippecanoe; Winfield Scott, the leading general of the army and hero of Lundy's Lane. They had all been born in Virginia, but were now from different states.

Scott, whose greatest achievement — his great march upon Mexico — was still in the future, was not very seriously considered by the delegates, and the real contest lay between Clay and Harrison. The majority of the delegates preferred Clay for President; but a few of the ablest men in the party, among whom were Thurlow Weed and Horace Greeley of New York, were using their utmost efforts to make Harrison the candidate.

The leader of the party was Henry Clay, as all acknowledged, but there were serious objections to his nomination. He had been a leader in national affairs for thirty years, and, owing to his positive, outspoken manner, had made many enemies. He had been a conspicuous advocate of the American system, or protective tariff, which was not popular in the South. To these objections was added that of the Anti-Masons. The Anti-Mason Party, which had been a strong factor in the presidential contest eight years before, had now dissolved, and most of its members had joined the Whigs; but Clay could not have commanded their votes, as he was himself a Freemason.

These forces, working against Clay, were too great to be overcome. Clay had authorized the withdrawal of his name from the convention, if, in the judgment of his friends, it seemed best for party harmony. It was about this time that he had made use of the now famous expression, "I would rather be right than be President."

Harrison was nominated on the fourth day of the convention by a plan resembling the so-called "unit rule." By this plan the delegates from each state put the power of voting into the hands of a committee of three, chosen from their own number. These several committees then met and chose Harrison for President, and this choice was ratified by the convention, as previously arranged. This

was certainly an unfair way of dealing with Mr. Clay. In open convention Clay would undoubtedly have been the first choice; but the committees, being smaller, were so managed by the politicians as to substitute the name of Harrison for that of Clay.

Clay's friends were deeply disappointed when their chief was set aside, and the Harrison men feared that they might "bolt" the ticket. One of the most ardent followers of Clay, John Tyler of Virginia, is said to have wept when his chief was defeated in convention. To shed tears will not usually prove a means of gaining the presidency of the United States, but in this case it did that very thing. The Harrison followers, to make sure of winning the support of the Clay followers, decided to choose one of them for second place, and as they were casting about for a suitable choice — behold John Tyler in tears! And he was straightway nominated for the vice presidency.<sup>1</sup>

Tyler was a man of some importance. He was a United States senator from Virginia, and had been governor of that state. He was formerly a Democrat, but, being opposed to Jackson's self-willed policy, he had left his party and joined the Whigs. The Whigs hoped, by placing him on the ticket, to win a certain floating vote from the South which they could not otherwise have counted on, as well as to appease the followers of Henry Clay.

#### WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON

Let us take a brief view of the chosen standard-bearer of the Whigs in this presidential contest. From the standpoint of availability no better choice than Harrison could have been made. It is the custom of our great political parties

<sup>1</sup> But, it must be added, not until after two or three others had declined the nomination.

to nominate for President, not always the greatest statesman in the party, but the one who is best fitted to win votes. Harrison had many points in his favor, not the least of which was that he had been out of public life for many years, had few political enemies, and his views on the great questions of the day were scarcely known. In addition, he had a very creditable military record and was the son of one of the Revolutionary fathers, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Going before the people with this record, he was in position to make a strong race.

In 1791, when the country was shocked by the news of the great defeat of St. Clair by the Indians in the West, William Henry Harrison, then a youth nineteen years, was a medical student in Philadelphia. He at once determined to abandon his studies, go to the West, and lend his aid to retrieve the honor of his country. Washington, who had been an intimate friend of his father, made him an ensign, and the young man set out with a brave heart to win glory for himself and honor for his country. He proceeded on foot across the Allegheny Mountains to Pittsburgh, where he took a boat and floated down the Ohio River to Cincinnati, then called Fort Washington.

A little later we find our young hero serving under General Wayne in the Indian wars in northwestern Ohio. In 1801 he was appointed governor of the Indiana Territory, a post which he held for twelve years. In November, 1811, he defeated the Prophet, twin brother of the great Indian chief Tecumseh, in the famous battle of Tippecanoe; and from this battle Harrison received his popular military name.

At the outbreak of the War of 1812, Harrison became commander of the army of the Northwest, and he did valiant service for his country in several hard-fought engagements, the most important of which was the battle of the Thames,

in which the English and Indians suffered a terrible defeat, and the famous Tecumseh was numbered among the slain.

The war over, Harrison settled down to a life of peace, and a few years later he became a member of the House of Representatives, and still later a United States senator from Ohio. John Quincy Adams, when President, appointed Harrison minister to the Republic of Colombia, South America; but Jackson, succeeding Adams, recalled him. He then retired to North Bend, a village near Cincinnati, and became a farmer. In 1836 he was the leading candidate of the Whigs for President, against Van Buren.

Harrison did not rank with the greatest statesmen of his time. His ability was far below that of his rival Clay, or of Webster; but he was a man of the purest of motives, had a kind and generous heart, and was above any imputation of political corruption.

The Democrats held their convention in Baltimore and renominated Van Buren without division; but for second place they made no nomination. The Vice President, Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky, had been chosen four years before by the Senate, and he now expected to be placed on the ticket for reëlection with Van Buren, but there was such opposition to him in the convention that it was decided to again leave the election to the Senate, in case Van Buren was chosen President by the electoral college. The Democrats put forth a strong declaration of principles, pronouncing against a United States Bank, a high protective tariff, and paternalism in general; while the Whigs had no platform at all.

#### THE LOG CABIN AND HARD CIDER CAMPAIGN

The campaign of 1840 was the most remarkable in the experience of the American people. It started out with a



whoop and a hurrah, and so continued, gaining in enthusiasm, to the time of the election. The Whigs had made "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" their battle-cry. Their meetings were vast beyond comparison. These mass-meetings, held in all parts of the Union, were addressed by Webster, Clay, Thomas Corwin, and a multitude of lesser lights. Harrison himself spoke about half a dozen times. Men would take their wives, sons, and daughters to these great gatherings and remain all day and often all night. At first it was attempted to count the people in attendance, but this practice was abandoned, and the crowds were measured by the acre. The greatest of these meetings was held at Dayton, Ohio, where the number was estimated at one hundred thousand.

A Democratic newspaper in Baltimore had made the statement that Harrison was only a backwoodsman, and would be more in his element in a log cabin with a barrel of hard cider than in the White House at Washington. The Whigs took up the cry, and made the log cabin and the barrel of cider the symbols of the campaign. These they always had at their meetings, with a live coon chained on top of the cabin. Horace Greeley started a paper in New York which he called *The Log Cabin*. It sprang into great popularity with a single bound, reaching an enormous circulation during the summer.

Then the songs! The campaign songs of 1840 were the most notable feature of the canvass. They were written for the occasion, printed in the papers, and sung at the meetings, rolling forth from fifty thousand throats and reverberating from hill to hill! The poetic merit of these songs is not of a high order, and none of them has lived in our literature. Their number was legion; we subjoin a few specimens.

CAMPAIGN SONGS OF 1840<sup>1</sup>

Now join the throng and swell the song,  
Extend the circle wider;  
And let us on for Harrison,  
Log cabin and hard cider.

And let Calhoun change with the moon,<sup>2</sup>  
And every such backslider;  
We'll go as one for Harrison —  
Log cabin and hard cider.

His cabin's fit and snug and neat,  
And full and free his larder;  
And though his cider may be hard,  
The times are vastly harder.

This one refers to the currency:

A man there is in Washington  
Yclept the arch magician;  
He holds the post of president,  
The people's high commission.  
He pledged himself to follow sure,  
Although it led to ruin,  
His 'lustrious predecessor's path.  
His name is Mat Van Buren.  
Oh, Van Buren, the mighty President Van Buren!

That monster the Subtreasury  
He thrusts upon the nation.  
Determined on his reckless course  
In spite of lamentation.  
Two currencies we now shall have  
To add to our disasters;  
The officers will have the gold,  
The people the shinplasters.  
Oh, Oh, Van Buren,  
You're an old humbug, Van Buren.

<sup>1</sup> These were selected from Greeley's *Log Cabin*. This paper was merged into the *Tribune* in September, 1841.

<sup>2</sup> John C. Calhoun, who had been acting with the Whigs several years, had now returned to the Democratic fold.

In imitation of Moore:

There is not in this wide world a veteran so true  
As he in the West, the brave Tippecanoe.  
Oh, the last ray of feeling and life shall depart  
Ere the deeds of his valor shall fade from my heart.

This was written for the sailors:

See yon seaman approach with his face full of ire,  
His long tom well loaded and ready to fire.  
Just give him the wink and he'll soon take the cue  
And tip up his glass for Old Tippecanoe,  
And swear that he'll join with the rest of the crew,  
To haul down the flag of Van Buren  
And run up Old Tippecanoe.

Here's one that seems to aspire to poetic fancy:

Away in the West the fair river beside,  
That waters North Bend in its beauty and pride,  
And shows in its mirror the summer sky blue,  
Oh, there dwells the farmer of Tippecanoe.

When the clear eastern sky in the morning's light beams,  
And the hills of Ohio grow warm in its gleams,  
When the fresh springing grass is bent low with the dew,  
With his plough in the furrow stands Tippecanoe.  
Hurrah for the farmer of Tippecanoe,  
The honest old farmer of Tippecanoe.  
With an arm that is strong and a heart that is true,  
The man of the people is Tippecanoe.

The following short one was used perhaps more than any other:

Farewell, old Van;  
You're a used-up man.  
To guard our ship  
We'll try old Tip,  
With Tip and Tyler  
We'll burst Van's biler.

Where were the Democrats all this time? They were limping behind and doing the best they could. They had

meetings, too, but not so large as those of the Whigs. They appealed to reason and argument; but the people refused to argue; they would not reason; they preferred to sing and shout. Old General Jackson came forth from his Hermitage and attempted to stay the rushing tide; but nothing could check the wild enthusiasm for Harrison. The Democrats were left far behind. When the election came Harrison swept the country, carrying two-thirds of the southern states and every northern state except New Hampshire and Illinois.

#### LAST DAYS OF PRESIDENT HARRISON

The joy of the Whigs at their victory was unbounded; and they little dreamed of the disasters that awaited them in the near future. The winter following the election was one prolonged jollification. The newly elected President, after a triumphal progress from his western home, reached Washington in February, on the sixty-eighth anniversary of his birthday.<sup>1</sup> He found the city swarming with office-seekers. He was courted and caressed from all sides, and little time was left him for rest.

Inauguration day was dark and foreboding. The new President rode on horseback in a two-hour procession through the streets of the city, after which he stood for another hour exposed, without cloak or overcoat, to a keen, chilling wind while delivering his inaugural address. When night came he was very much exhausted; but he seemed to recover from the effect of his exposure, and the new administration was launched on a promising voyage, with Daniel Webster at the helm as Secretary of State.

The President was besieged with office-seekers, who gave him no rest day nor night. So kindly was his disposition that he could turn away none unheard. He rose at an early

<sup>1</sup> Schouler, Vol. IV, p. 359.

hour in the morning, and took a long walk before breakfast, after which he was busy with his new duties till late at night. But his strength was failing, and one morning during his walk he took a chill which speedily developed into pneumonia. On the fourth of April, half an hour after midnight, Harrison was dead, his last words being, "May the principles of government be carried out."

The exultant joy of the Whigs was now changed to mourning. No President had before died in office, and they had not taken such a possibility into account. Tyler would become President, it is true, but they were not sure of Tyler. He had been a Democrat until recent years, and their fears that he was not in sympathy with the party that elected him were soon realized.

The whole people, regardless of party fealty, mourned the departed President. The funeral can best be described in the words of one of our leading historians:—

The seventh of April was the day of the funeral. The north portico of the mansion was hung with unaccustomed black. They who had hustled in its walls with headlong zeal a few days before, trod gently and spoke in whispers. The body, in its leaden casket, was taken from the East Room, where it had lain in state on a bier heaped with flowers; it was placed on an open funeral car, which stood at the north portico, covered with black velvet and drawn by six white horses, each with its colored groom. A wailing of trumpets arose, inexpressibly mournful, and a beating of muffled drums, as the military escort began its march down the avenue with arms reversed. The sky was overcast, and only a stray sunbeam from the clouds would shine upon the sable car with its nodding plumes, as the procession moved eastward in slow array.<sup>1</sup>

The body of the dead President was finally carried to his western home, where it was laid to rest in a beautiful spot among the trees, on the banks of the Ohio River.

<sup>1</sup> Schouler, Vol. IV, p. 365.



## CHAPTER XVII

### TEXAS AND OREGON

THE United States had grown greatly in extent of territory since the close of the Revolution. The greatest single increase came through the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. What was then known as Louisiana was many times larger than the state that is now known by that name. It comprised all the states on the west bank of the Mississippi and a few others. Next to Louisiana our great accessions of territory (not counting Alaska) were California, Texas, and Oregon.

### REVOLUTION IN TEXAS

The first white settlers in Texas were Spanish Catholic missionaries, who built missions there about two hundred years ago. Texas was then a part of Mexico and Mexico belonged to Spain. In 1824 Mexico set up a republic and won its independence from Spain. Texas was one of its northern provinces. It was then almost uninhabited, except by Indian tribes.

The Mexican Government was anxious to have Texas settled and it offered large grants of land almost for nothing. Moses Austin, an American citizen, had already secured a land grant (1821). But he died before he could carry out his project of planting a colony in Texas. Thereupon his son, Stephen F. Austin, carried out the purpose of his father. He soon had a flourishing colony in the valley of the Brazos River, and the echoes of the settler's ax were heard in the forest where they had never been heard before. Stephen

F. Austin was a great-hearted, kindly man. It is said that every child in the colony would run to him and climb on his knee as readily as on its father's. He has been called the Father of Texas. The capital of the state bears his name.

Austin's colony was founded in 1822, and after that other settlers came rapidly, a great many of them from the United States. This alarmed Mexico; she feared too many Americans would create a sentiment in favor of seceding from her and joining the United States, and the fear was well founded.

In the early thirties there was open war between Mexico and Texas. There were two reasons for this. First, because Mexico put Texas under military government: second, because Mexico, having freed her slaves, wanted Texas to do so too; but many of the Texans were from our slave states and they refused to do so.

For several years bands of lawless men of each party traversed the lonely wilderness for hundreds of miles and they fought when they met. Many were their bloody encounters. By 1835 the Texans were in open revolt and the next year they declared their independence and set up the Republic of Texas.

Two notable figures now come upon the scene. One is Santa Anna, the President of Mexico, a notorious character who called himself the "Napoleon of the West." The other man was Sam Houston, who became the first President of the Republic of Texas.

In the spring of 1836 there were two events that are still famous in the history of Texas. One was the massacre of the Alamo, the other was the battle of San Jacinto; and they were very different in their results.

The Alamo was a stone fort near San Antonio that had

been built for a mission nearly a hundred years before. One morning in the spring of 1836 the people of the village were surprised by the approach of an army of Mexicans, several thousand strong, led by Santa Anna himself, the Napoleon of the West. There was a small army of Texans, not 200 men, who stationed themselves in the Alamo determined to fight to the last. Among them was David Crockett, known as "Davie" Crockett.

Let us turn aside for a moment to notice this remarkable man. He was born in a wretched cabin in Tennessee. His father was a miserable drunkard and was cruel to his family. When Davie was but twelve years old his father hired him to a Dutchman to help drive a herd of cattle 400 miles on foot and the little fellow was to make his way back alone as best he could. How he obtained food and crossed rivers I do not know, but a few months later he reached his father's cabin safe and sound. Long before he was of age he left home, plunged deeper into the wilderness, and became a famous hunter. He had many a thrilling adventure. During the War of 1812 he served in the Indian campaigns under General Jackson and was one of the most daring soldiers in the army.

Davie Crockett was a good story-teller, was very witty and full of original sayings. He was very popular and his friends induced him to be a candidate for the legislature. He consented and enjoyed the excitement of the campaign. He said, "When I goes electioneering, I goes fixed for the purpose. I've got a deer-leather suit of clothes with two big pockets. I puts a bottle of whiskey in one and a twist of tobacco in the other and starts out." He was elected to the legislature and after serving for a time announced himself for Congress. He was elected to Congress three times, serving six years in all.

In Congress Davie Crockett attracted much attention. He knew nothing about lawmaking, but his original wit and his wild, uncultured ways of the frontier attracted attention and made him many friends. One day when a speaker in the House strayed from his subject Crockett exclaimed that he was "barking up the wrong tree," an expression that we sometimes hear to this day.

President John Quincy Adams invited Crockett among many others to a formal dinner and here is in part Crockett's description of his experience:

I went to dinner and walked all around the long table looking for something that I liked. At last I took my seat beside a fat goose and helped myself to as much of it as I wanted. I hadn't took more'n three bites when I looked away and when I looked back, my plate was gone, goose and all. I seed a man walkin' off with it. I said, "Hello, Mister, bring back my goose." After that whenever I looked away, I held on to my plate with my left hand. When we was all done a man came along with a great glass thing. It was stuck full of little glass cups with something in them that looked good. I says, Mister, bring that thing here — let's taste what you got. I found they was mighty sweet and so I took six of them.

The newspaper stories about how Crockett acted in Washington were too much even for the backwoodsmen who had elected him, and when he stood for a fourth election, he was defeated by a man who had more training in good manners. This was galling to Crockett. He left Tennessee and went to Texas, and we find him at the Alamo. This brings us back to our story.

When Santa Anna surrounded the Alamo with his army and decided to take it by storm — that is, by one grand assault — there were but 188 men in it. They fought like demons and slew hundreds of Mexicans, but the odds were too great. At length every Texan but six was slain. These six were taken alive, and among them was Davie Crockett.

They were brought before Santa Anna, and he, with a wave of the hand, said, "Kill them, every one of them."

At this Crockett sprang like a tiger at the throat of Santa Anna, but a dozen swords were thrust into him and he fell dead without a groan. The other five were also dispatched and not a man was left of the brave defenders of the Alamo.

**"REMEMBER THE ALAMO"**

At this point we must notice another Texan, still more remarkable than Crockett — General Samuel Houston. He was born in Virginia, but his parents moved to the wilds of Tennessee where the boy grew to manhood. Their home was near a tribe of the Cherokee Indians and Sam learned to love them almost better than his own race. Many a day he spent chasing the deer with the Cherokees, or playing their games with them. Like Davie Crockett, he served in the war against the Creeks under Jackson, and was in the famous battle of the Horseshoe. Here he was wounded by an arrow which stuck in his thigh. He asked a comrade to pull it out, but the man, after trying, declared that he could not. "Draw it out or I will strike you with my sword," cried Houston. The man did so, tearing the flesh with the barb. General Jackson then ordered Houston to the rear, but he refused to go. He rushed to the front, to the thickest of the fight, where, later in the day, he was struck down by two bullets in the shoulder. He was carried from the field and for many weeks his life was despaired of.

At the age of twenty-five Houston went to Nashville to study law. In 1823 he was elected to Congress, and after serving two terms, he was elected Governor of Tennessee.

While governor the old inclinations of his boyhood gained control of him. He resigned the office and fled to the Cherokee Indians. For several years he lived with the



Cherokees, wearing their garb and entering into all their ways of life. In 1832 he left them and went to Texas. This was really the beginning of his career. He was a signer of the Declaration of Independence of Texas, and was then chosen commander of her armies. He won the battle that gave Texas her freedom, became the first President of the Republic of Texas and, after her admission into our Union, was one of the first to be sent to the United States Senate from the new state. Here he served for many years and when he retired in his old age to his adopted state, he was again elected governor. Then came the Civil War. Governor Houston was opposed to the secession of the state, but Texas seceded in spite of him. He was then deposed from his office and he retired to his home in Walker County, where he died in the same month that witnessed the fall of Vicksburg and the battle of Gettysburg — July, 1863.

“Remember the Alamo” was the cry of the Texans after they heard of that brutal massacre. Houston had a small army, probably a few more than seven hundred men. Santa Anna’s numbered at least eighteen hundred. But a few weeks after the Alamo the two armies came together and the most important battle ever fought in Texas was the result — the battle of San Jacinto.

It was the morning of April 21. Santa Anna had led his army across the Buffalo Bayou near its junction with the San Jacinto River and here he came face to face with the army of Houston. The Texans had but two small pieces of artillery called the “Twin Sisters.” A volley from these caused Santa Anna to fall back out of sight to form in battle line. Houston now sent Deaf Smith, a celebrated Texas spy, with two or three others to destroy a bridge over the bayou over which the Mexicans had come. This done, the Mexicans had no means of escape in case of defeat. Hous-

ton then led his men in three columns silently toward the enemy. When within seventy yards the Texans shouted their battle-cry, "Remember the Alamo!" and made an impetuous dash toward the unprepared Mexicans. The latter were soon in utter confusion. They started to run to cross the bridge, but found it burned to ashes. Many then leaped into the bayou and were drowned. Many were taken captive, some scattered and hid in the prairie.

Among the last was Santa Anna himself and next morning he was found lying in the grass with a blanket over his head, like an ostrich that hides its head in the sand. When taken to General Houston he said:

"I am General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, a prisoner of war at your disposal. You can afford to be generous; you have conquered the Napoleon of the West."

General Houston at first intended to put his captive to death on account of his treatment of the Texans at the Alamo; but it was decided that the Mexican President could have his freedom on the condition that he would do three things — restore all captured property, order all Mexican troops from the soil of Texas, and promise never again to take up arms against its people. Santa Anna did this and Texas was free. The Republic of Texas was established as an independent nation and was recognized by the United States and several European countries. General Sam Houston became its first President.

#### TEXAS JOINS THE SISTERHOOD

During the next nine years Texas was an independent republic, though the war with Mexico dragged on in an irregular way. Santa Anna could not, or at least did not, fully keep his promise. Meantime there was a great deal of planning and intriguing going on both in Texas and in the

United States with the view of making Texas one of the states of our Union. It would be needless to give here the history of this intriguing.

A great many people of the North opposed the annexation of Texas, because it was sure to become a slave state and they were not in favor of increasing the number of slave states. But President Tyler was very much in favor of annexation, as also was his Secretary of State, Mr. Upshur. But while the plans were maturing Mr. Upshur was killed, as we have noticed, by the bursting of the great gun on the *Princeton*. The next Secretary of State was a man of world-wide fame — John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. He was also greatly in favor of annexation and in April, 1844, a secret treaty of annexation was made with Texas. This was laid before the Senate, but that body rejected it, and the Texas question was left over and became the chief issue in the presidential campaign of 1844.

In that campaign James K. Polk of Tennessee was nominated for President by the Democrats, who favored annexation; and Henry Clay by the Whigs, who opposed it. Mr. Clay might have been elected had it not been for his "Alabama Letter." In the midst of the campaign, when his party was talking against annexation, Clay wrote a letter to a friend in Alabama saying that he was not specially opposed to annexing Texas and that if the matter could be taken out of politics he would be glad to see Texas come into the Union. This letter, which was printed in the newspapers, was not in agreement with Whig doctrine and it cost Mr. Clay many votes and perhaps the Presidency itself.

The campaign of 1844 was an exciting one. It was the last fight for the great office by Henry Clay, the gallant "Harry of the West," the "mill boy of the slashes." And

he lost this time as he had lost before. Polk was elected President and Texas, the "Lone Star State," became a member of the Union within the following year, in fact, before Polk was inaugurated.

#### OREGON IN THE EARLY DAYS

In 1845 the term Oregon had a much more extensive meaning than now. It included what is now the great states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and a large part of southwestern Canada.

From time immemorial this vast country had been occupied only by Indian tribes. But the time was now come when it was to become the home of civilized man. In 1792 Captain Robert Gray, in the ship *Columbia*, first discovered the mouth of the great river of the Northwest, sailed up it for thirty miles and gave it the name of his ship, the *Columbia*. When Thomas Jefferson became President he sent out the Lewis and Clark expedition to cross the continent to the Pacific Northwest.<sup>1</sup>

Both the United States and England claimed the great Oregon country. The claim of the United States was based chiefly on the Lewis and Clark expedition and the earlier discovery of the Columbia by Captain Gray. But this was not enough. There must be actual occupation of the country in order to hold it. And this began with the fur trader. Mr. Lewis in his published journal had shown what great opportunities there were for the fur trade in the Northwest. One of the first to respond was John Jacob Astor, a merchant prince of New York who was known in every seaport of the world. He sent out a party who founded a town at the mouth of the Columbia and named it Astoria. Soon after this a company of men went up the Columbia to

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. IX.

found another trading post and at the place where the Snake River flows into it they found a stake driven into the ground and bound around it was a paper with this statement: "Know hereby that this country is claimed by Great Britain." This reminds us of the plates buried along the Ohio by the French before the French and Indian War, as we have noticed in a preceding chapter.

When the War of 1812 came, the Hudson Bay Company, a great English fur-trading company, got possession of Astoria and for some years the whole Columbia Valley was under British control. But the final ownership of the country was not yet determined. Accordingly, a "joint occupation" was arranged between the United States and England in 1818. By this, Americans or Englishmen could settle or trade in Oregon as they liked. This plan was continued for many years, but the time came when the ownership of the country must be settled.

After the fur trader, the next class of white men to go to Oregon were the missionaries. A pretty story is related about the beginnings of mission work in Oregon. Four Indians were sent by one of the Oregon tribes to far-away St. Louis to see General Clark whom they remembered as having visited their country (in the Lewis and Clark expedition) to ask for "that white man's book of heaven," as they called the Bible. They had heard of the Bible and the white man's religion from the fur traders. Two of these Indians died in St. Louis and one of the remaining two died on the way back.

This pathetic story was published in many religious papers and it soon began to bear fruit. The various churches began to send missionaries. The best known of these is Marcus Whitman, who, after spending some time in Oregon, returned to the East for the purpose of awakening a greater



interest in the work. He went back again with a number of helpers and ere long there were several flourishing Indian missions in Oregon. The Indians were taught religion and also to read and write, to till the soil, and to raise stock.

The older Indians as well as the children were gathered in classes and taught small portions of the Bible that had been translated into their language and printed on a little printing press.

The next class to go to Oregon was the permanent settlers. Great interest in that distant land had been spreading for some time and in 1838 an emigration society was formed in Massachusetts. Meetings were held in towns and cities to enlist settlers and many were found ready to go. In 1843 what was known as "The Great Migration" took place.

In one company that left Missouri there were a thousand people who drove before them five thousand animals. At night they turned the animals loose to graze and made a circular inclosure with the wagons. In this circle they pitched their tents and built fires. After supper they retired to the tents and wagons for the night, a few men remaining on guard all night. At four in the morning the sharp crack of a rifle announced that sleeping time was over. In a few minutes all were up preparing breakfast and sixty men would start out to drive in the horses and cattle, some of which had strayed perhaps two miles.

Soon the day's journey was begun and, but for a short rest at noon, they jogged along till the shades of evening brought them again to the camp fire. It took more than a hundred days for this company to reach their new home on the Pacific Coast.

The saddest tragedy in the history of Oregon remains to be told. There is no nobler figure in the early history of

that country than Marcus Whitman, the missionary. He was also a physician and in 1847 when the measles broke out among the children, he attended both, white and Indian children alike, with the same self-sacrifice that he had always shown. The white children recovered rapidly while many of the Indian children died. This led the Indians to believe that Whitman was a sorcerer and was causing their children to die. They conspired to kill him. One day they seized him, his faithful wife, and seven other persons and put them to death with horrible tortures. These superstitious red men did not know that they were murdering their best friend. The tribe that committed the deed was made to suffer severely at the hands of the white settlers.

“FIFTY-FOUR FORTY OR FIGHT”

Oregon extended as far northward as the line of fifty-four degrees and forty minutes north latitude, to the boundary of Alaska, which belonged to Russia. Several times the Americans offered to settle the boundary line at forty-nine degrees, the same as the northern boundary of the Louisiana Purchase. But England refused and insisted on the Columbia River as the boundary.

The years passed and the country began to fill up with settlers, as we have noticed. The settlers were nearly all Americans and they cried loudly for the protection of their Government.

Such was the condition at the opening of the presidential campaign of 1844. Now it was thought that as the country was filling up with Americans and as England had refused to accept the line of forty-nine, she should not have any of the Oregon country and that the United States should claim it all. The Democrats, who had nominated Mr. Polk, thereupon made a campaign cry, “Fifty-four Forty or Fight,”

which meant that we should fight England unless she left us all of Oregon, to fifty-four forty.

Mr. Polk was elected, but whether that campaign cry had much to do with the result or not is not known. At any rate, when Polk became President he gave up the hope of making the line fifty-four forty because England refused to yield. Nothing less than a war would have secured the whole country for either nation, and neither England nor the United States wished to go to war on account of Oregon. Indeed, America had good reasons for not going into a war with England at that time, for a war was brewing on the south, with Mexico.

Accordingly, the two nations agreed to divide the Oregon country at forty-nine, each taking about half. Our portion, since divided into three great states — Oregon, Washington, and Idaho — is a region of wonderful possibilities. It is divided north and south by the Cascade Mountains, with such grand peaks at Mt. Rainier and Mt. Adams; and east and west by the majestic Columbia River. For fruit and grain raising and for timber this great region is difficult to parallel.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN CALIFORNIA

THE event that furnishes the subject of this chapter was but one of a train of events that rendered the middle years of the nineteenth century memorable in the history of America. The discovery of the precious metal on the Pacific slope was in itself a great event, and it became the chief factor in determining the early social conditions of the Great West, and in peopling that region with a rapidity unparalleled in the history of colonization. But this discovery did more; it became a powerful weight in the political balance in which was suspended the destiny of the American people.

At this time the greatest political issue before the American public was the same that had disturbed the harmony between the North and the South for many years — the slavery question. The South was anxious about the welfare of her peculiar institution, and as a safeguard against unfavorable legislation had managed, from early in the century, to admit the new states in pairs, one in the North and one in the South, so as to preserve the balance of power in the United States Senate.

The South began to view with alarm the exhaustion of her territory, while that of the North seemed inexhaustible. The Louisiana Purchase was wedge-shaped, the larger end being north of thirty-six-thirty, and the South had used up her smaller end, beginning with the admission of Louisiana in 1812, and ending with the admission of Arkansas in 1836. No more territory remained to the South, except

Florida and the Indian Territory, until the admission of Texas; and these were no match in extent to the vast region of the Northwest after the settlement of the Oregon boundary. Hence came the Mexican War.

The Mexican War was ostensibly waged on account of Texas; but there was a deeper cause. It was the South that furnished the majority of the soldiers; it was the spirit of the South that pushed the war to a finish, resulting in the dismemberment of Mexico, and the adding to our public domain the boundless wilderness of the Southwest. The object was to carve the California country into slave states, and thus balance the future free states of the North. Thus we see the great political significance of California.

The treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, concluded February 2, 1848, at the end of the Mexican War, resulted as everyone foresaw in the cession by Mexico to the United States of the unsettled wilderness in the Southwest. The Mexicans did not dream perhaps of the fabulous wealth that lay hidden so near the surface throughout a large portion of the ceded territory; and even if they had, the conditions would not have been changed, for their country lay helpless at the feet of the conquerors from the North.

#### SUTTER'S SAWMILL

California was a wild country in 1848. The inhabitants, who numbered but a few thousand, were a strange mixture of Yankees from the East, Mormons, Mexicans, and wild Indians with a sprinkling of Hawaiians, negroes, and Europeans. They lived for the most part in rude log huts or adobe houses, scattered through the wilderness near the cattle ranches or missions, or clustered here and there into groups that promised to grow into towns and cities whenever civilization should penetrate into that remote region.



Northeast from the rude village of San Francisco lay the beautiful valley of the Sacramento River. The most important personage in this valley was the enterprising Swiss, John A. Sutter. He had come into that country nine years before, possessed himself of some thousands of acres of land, and on the north bank of the American River, near its junction with the Sacramento, had built a fort, known far and near as Sutter's Fort, and this became the radiating point of all the settlements in the Sacramento Valley.<sup>1</sup>

Sutter had several hundred men in his employ; he owned twelve thousand cattle, fifteen thousand sheep, and other property in like proportion. He was truly a prince in the western wilds, and was monarch of all he surveyed. In the employ of Sutter was a man named James W. Marshall, a carpenter from New Jersey. Sutter decided to build a sawmill, chose Marshall to manage its construction, and made him a partner in its ownership. Owing to its proximity to the best timber land, a site was chosen on the south fork of the American River, about forty miles eastward from Sutter's Fort, and near the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The place was called Coloma. Here at the beginning of the year 1848 Marshall, with a few Mormons and Indians, was engaged in building the sawmill when he made the discovery that was destined to move the world. They had been digging a mill-race, and to wash out the loose earth a current of water was occasionally turned into it. On the afternoon of the twenty-fourth of January as Marshall was walking leisurely along the newly washed out mill-race, he noticed in the sand numerous yellow, glittering particles that proved to be gold!

Marshall, a few days later, after convincing himself of the nature of his find, mounted a horse and hastened to

<sup>1</sup> H. H. Bancroft, Vol. XXIII, p. 12

Sutter's Fort. Finding Mr. Sutter alone, he exhibited his nuggets, and the two men, applying every test within their reach, were fully convinced that the shining metal was gold. They then decided not to reveal the secret at that time; but such secrets are hard to keep. In a very few weeks all the settlers in the valley had heard of Marshall's discovery, but the majority were slow to believe that anything would come of it.<sup>1</sup>

More than three months passed before the people throughout California were fully convinced that a great discovery had been made. But when, early in May, some of the miners came to San Francisco laden with bottles, tin cans, and buckskin bags filled with the precious metal — when one Samuel Brannan, holding up a bottle of the dust in one hand, and swinging his hat in the other, passed through the streets shouting, "Gold! gold! gold from the American River!" — they could doubt no longer.

The conversion of San Francisco was complete. The people were now ready to believe every report from the mines, however exaggerated; and immediately the rush began. Many sold all their possessions and hastened to the gold fields. All other business came to a standstill. The two newspapers suspended publication for want of workmen. By the middle of May three-fourths of the male population of the town had gone to the mines. The prices of shovels, pickaxes, blankets, and the like rose in a few days to six times their former value. The town council abandoned its sittings; the little church on the plaza was closed;

<sup>1</sup> It is not true, as many believe, that a furor of excitement was created at the first news of the discovery. The fact is, most of the people beyond Sutter's community dismissed the subject from their minds as of little importance, many refusing to believe the report. The two San Francisco weekly newspapers scarcely mentioned the subject during the winter. Men wishing to visit the alleged gold fields, would pretend they had other business in that part of the country.

farms were left tenantless and waving fields of grain let run to waste. The judge abandoned the bench, and the doctor his patients.<sup>1</sup> The excitement spread down the coast to Monterey, to Santa Barbara, to Los Angeles, and to San Diego, and the result was the same. The people were seized with a delirium, and the one universal cry along the coast, from the seashore to the mountains, was "gold! gold!"

#### THE "FORTY-NINERS"

As the telegraph and the railway had not yet penetrated the western wilderness, the news of the wonderful discovery was slow to reach the East. It was estimated that by mid-summer four thousand men were scattered through the Sacramento Valley searching for the golden treasure, and this number was considerably augmented before the end of the year; but it was not until the next year that the emigrants from abroad began to arrive. Then they came in crowds. Before the close of the year 1849, seventy-five thousand had reached the golden shores to seek for the hidden wealth. These were called "Forty-Niners"; and this name was also applied to others who came later.

The sea was dotted with ships from every clime headed for the Pacific coast. Great caravans wound their way across the western plains toward the setting sun. Men from every corner of the Union, men of every religion, every nationality, as if led by an unseen siren, hastened to join the moving trains to the land of gold.

But, lo! a terrible visitor came that year — a visitor that stalks from land to land, and leaves desolation frightful and irreparable in his trail. It was the cholera! The cholera seized these west-bound trains, and many a weary traveler never reached his Eldorado, but found a nameless grave far

<sup>1</sup> H. H. Bancroft, Vol. XXIII, p. 62.

from friends and home, upon the vast and trackless regions of the West! Other foes there were — famine and exposure, the snows of the Sierras, the wild beast, and the wild Indian. Against these the hardy pilgrim could, in some measure, fortify himself; but that dreadful enemy, the cholera, found him unarmed — and thousands yielded to its deadly embrace.

A long and wearisome journey it was, but a great number braved its perils. Sometimes the line of wagons was unbroken for miles, and at night the gleaming camp-fires looked like the lights of a distant city.<sup>1</sup> Some took their families with them; but the great majority were unmarried, or left their families in the East, intending to return. It was near midsummer when this stream of humanity began to pour into the Sacramento Valley — some to realize the dream of fortune that had lured them from their homes; but more to be disappointed, to return broken in spirit and in health, or to find an unknown grave in the wilderness.

Not only from beyond the mountains, but also from the sea, the treasure seekers were pouring into the land of promise. They came from every corner of the globe — from the far-off Orient, from the frozen North, and from the sunny South. The news of the golden discovery had been published in all the leading newspapers throughout the world, and the excitement created in foreign countries was scarcely less than in our own country. Ships were diverted from the channels of commerce and headed for California, where they began to arrive in the early spring of 1849; and during that year and the next hundreds of vessels were left helpless at San Francisco, their crews having caught the gold fever and deserted them.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. H. Bancroft, Vol. XXIII, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> W. T. Sherman, *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 96.

The voyage around Cape Horn was long and perilous, and many a weary voyager wept for joy on coming in sight of the Golden Gate. But a large number went by way of Panama; and, owing to the false promises of the fraudulent agents of whom they had purchased their tickets, and to the inability of the vessels to return from San Francisco for want of crews, thousands were forced to remain for weeks and even months on the isthmus, where the deadly climate and the cholera swept many into the grave.

#### A VIEW OF THE MINERS AND THE MINES

Within three years after the first discovery by Marshall it was estimated that one hundred thousand men were at work in the California gold mines. This number was increased but little in the years following, as the new arrivals scarcely exceeded in number the losses by death and the numbers leaving for their homes.

Coloma, the site of the original discovery, was for a time the center of all mining operations; but, as the crowds came in, the field was widened until it covered most of the Sacramento Valley and the western slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains; it was later extended southward through the San Joaquin Valley. The mines in various places were exceedingly rich in gold deposits, as much as ten thousand dollars' worth of the metal being frequently taken from a claim ten feet square. Gold was found in grains, pellets, scales, and in seams through quartz. Nuggets weighing a pound or more were frequently found. The largest nugget ever found in the California mines was unearthed by five poor men in November, 1854. It weighed one hundred and sixty-one pounds, was about seven-eighths pure, and yielded thirty-five thousand dollars.

The yield of gold throughout California reached the sum of



sixty-five million dollars in one year (1853); and the entire output in the first eight years was about five hundred million dollars.

Such figures would seem to indicate that every miner must have made a fortune; but this is far from the truth. Some, it is true, were wise enough, after a rich find, to abandon the field before spending or wasting what they had gained; others, honest, well-meaning men who had left families in the East, worked steadily with fair returns, until they had laid by a competence, after which they returned to their homes. But the majority of the miners were as poor after several years' toil as when they began.

Some of these were of the unlucky, ne'er-do-well sort who fail at everything they attempt;<sup>1</sup> but a greater number were of the profligate class, who, at the end of each week, would hie to the drinking and gambling dens, and there carouse till the week's earnings were gone. And even the honest man was often lured to his ruin by these glittering dens.

The gambling shark was early on the ground. He came not to work, but to lie in wait for the sturdy miner returning to camp with the fruit of his toil; and too often the silly fly

<sup>1</sup> Among these may be named Marshall, the original discoverer. He lacked the ability to compete with other miners. In religion he was a spiritualist, and he flitted here and there among the mines searching for some rich treasure in obedience to his supposed supernatural guides. Ill luck followed him constantly, and he became petulant, morbid, and misanthropic. He died in poverty and obscurity, alone in his cabin, in 1885. Two years later the California legislature appropriated five thousand dollars for the erection of a monument to the memory of Marshall. The monument was erected on a hill near the place of the first discovery of gold. On the monument stands the figure of a man with outstretched hand, the finger pointing to the exact spot where Marshall picked up the first shining nugget of gold.

Sutter was also among the unsuccessful. The discovery of gold proved his ruin. It led to the destruction of his land and cattle, and scattered his laborers far and wide. His vast possessions soon dwindled to nothing, and for sustenance he accepted donations from the state. He lacked the ability to profit by the vast opportunities that had been thrown in his way. — BANCROFT, Vol. XXIII, p. 103.

allowed himself to be entrapped in the spider's web. One man, after some weeks of fruitless search, found a pocket of gold in a river bank from which he gathered several thousand dollars' worth in a few hours. But prosperity was too much for him; the gamblers had him in their power before night, and by midnight he was drunk and penniless.

The dress of the miner consisted of a coarse woolen or checked shirt, loose trousers tucked into high, wrinkled boots, a broad-brimmed slouch hat, and a belt round the waist, from which bristled his knife and pistols. The average miner was honest, faithful to a friend, quick to resent an injury, but forgiving, and generous to a fault. He cultivated an air of reckless daring, and looked with contempt on all things effeminate. When too far from camp to reach it at night, he slept in the open air on a bed of leaves or wrapped in his blanket. He lived so near to Nature's heart that in a few years, if he remained, he lost his hold on the refinements of civilization, and became almost as much a child of the forest as was the untamed Indian. The long hair falling over his shoulders and the untrimmed beard gave him a wild and shaggy appearance, but the twinkle of good humor in his eye soon dispelled any fears that his appearance might awaken in the timid.

Camp life among the miners had its joys as well as its hardships. There was an air of social freedom unknown in the older settlements. Democracy reigned supreme, and social caste was nowhere tolerated. A man might vie with his neighbor in hunting gold, or in feats of strength; but if he attempted to outdo him in dress, personal appearance or refinement of manner, he was instantly marked as an object of ridicule.

Family life among the miners there was almost none. Here and there was a man whose wife had accompanied

him and shared his wild life in the wilderness, but the vast majority were unmarried, or had broken home ties, and left their families in the East.

Many of the camps were entirely without women, and here was illustrated most vividly how Nature has made the sexes each indispensable to the other. These horny-handed pioneers would often walk ten miles and more simply to see a woman, without expecting to form her acquaintance. It often happened in the towns, that a miner, meeting a little girl in the street, would catch her up in his arms, shower her face with kisses, and release her only after dropping an ounce or more of gold dust into her hand. Wild life in the forest seemed to increase rather than diminish in these men's hearts the feeling of tenderness toward women and children. The dearth of women on the Pacific coast was felt for several years, and it left a lasting impression on the community. For many years afterward it was difficult to find a jury in all California that would convict a woman for any crime.

During the first few years following the gold discovery, great numbers of people came to California, not with the intention of returning, but to make the Golden State their home. Towns sprang up in many places; law and order gradually took the place of rowdyism and disorder. The time was at hand for California to enter the union of states.

#### CALIFORNIA IN NATIONAL POLITICS

A presidential election following close upon the Mexican War, one of the successful generals, Zachary Taylor, the hero of Buena Vista, was chosen to the high office. General Winfield Scott had won victories equal to those of Taylor, but he did not receive equal honor to that accorded Taylor; and the reason was that his laurels were won at a later

period, when the American people had, in some measure, lost their interest in the struggle.

A great movement usually wins in popularity as it shows its ability to succeed, but the opposite was true in the case of the Mexican War, notwithstanding the unbroken success of the Americans. The reason for this change of sentiments was, first, the people began to feel a little ashamed of dealing so harshly with a weak sister republic; and, second, the enthusiasm in the North was lessened by the fear that the lands about to be acquired from Mexico would become slave territory, while the people of the South experienced a similar change of heart from the opposite cause — a fear that those lands would not become slave territory.

During the brief presidential term of Zachary Taylor, the North and the South were at variance on this great question. The strife was deep-seated, and the peace of the Union was seriously threatened, when suddenly a new and unforeseen element entered into the contest. This new element was furnished by the application of California for statehood. California had been settled far more rapidly than any other portion of our country, and before the close of the year 1849 a convention met at Monterey, framed a state constitution, and made application for admission into the Union. This constitution expressly forbade slavery within the state. The miners were, with few exceptions, men who did not own slaves, though many had come from the South. The slaveholders had, as a rule, found it inexpedient to leave their homes, and go to the distant mines, and impossible to remove thither with their slaves and be successful. It was, therefore, the non-slaveholding class that made up the population of the Pacific coast, and, when the constitution was framed, the vote was unanimous to exclude slavery forever from the bounds of the new state.

This was a severe blow to the South. California was the garden of the Pacific slope, the very best portion of the newly acquired territory, and to see their darling institution forever prohibited from it was more than the slaveholders could bear. Moreover, if California became a free state, the balance in the Senate would be broken, and the preponderance of political power would henceforth rest with the North. The South, therefore, sternly resisted the admission of the new state in that form, and demanded that it be divided in the middle and the southern half made a slave state.

A convention of leading southern statesmen met at Nashville, Tennessee, and declared that any state had a right to secede from the Union. The whole South was threatening to break up the Union if the North did not yield.

Such was the condition of affairs when that memorable year, 1850, was ushered in — memorable not so much for the death of the President and of the great Calhoun, as for the excessive commotion of the people and for the extraordinary working of Congress. California was knocking loudly for admission; the South was hostile and threatening to destroy the Union, while the people of the North were in equal turmoil — about half preferring to yield for the sake of peace, the other half declaring frantically that slavery should encroach no farther on free soil.

While this unrest of the people was at its height, the Thirty-First Congress met. The United States Senate was the ablest that ever met in the nation's capital. There we find for the last time the great triumvirate, Clay, Webster, and Calhoun, and these were ably seconded by William H. Seward, Stephen A. Douglas, Jefferson Davis, Thomas H. Benton, Salmon P. Chase, and many lesser lights.



Early in the session Clay, the great compromiser, came forward with his last and greatest compromise, known in history as the Omnibus Bill, or the Compromise Measures of 1850. This bill consisted of five measures, one of which was the admission of California as a free state. It was debated for several months, torn to pieces, and finally passed piecemeal. Clay announced that on a certain day in February he would speak on the bill, and thousands of his admirers came to Washington from various sections of the Union to hear this last and greatest speech of his life. Three historic speeches by Calhoun, Webster, and Seward followed in March. Thus the battle of the giants continued during the spring and summer; but before any of the measures of this famous bill became law, the country was shocked by the death of President Taylor, which occurred on the ninth of July, 1850. Taylor was a southern man and a slaveholder, but his patriotism rose high above his partisanship; his feelings were national and not sectional. After the brief interruption occasioned by the obsequies of the dead President and by the installation of his successor, Millard Fillmore of New York, the discussion of the great measures was resumed, and early in September the one with which we are dealing in this chapter, the admission of California as a free state, became a law. Thus the political balance in the United States Senate was broken, never to be restored. The South had long been in the minority in the lower House, owing to the greater population of the North, and now the loss of equal power in the Senate produced the general belief throughout that section that, as regards national legislation, the institution of slavery would henceforth be at the mercy of the North.

## CHAPTER XIX

### A BATCH OF BIOGRAPHIES

A GREAT writer has said that history is nothing more than an aggregation of biographies, and there is much truth in the saying. No one can understand history without a knowledge of the chief figures in public life, their motives and achievements. The lives of the greatest characters in our history — such as Washington, Franklin, Webster and Lincoln — are well known to every reader, or may easily be procured from any library. But there are many who may not have played a leading part in the great movements of history, but whose careers were none the less important and interesting. It is not so easy for the reader to procure biographies of this class. We, therefore, devote this chapter to a notice of a few of them, beginning with two notable foreigners.

#### JENNY LIND

One of the memorable incidents of the year 1850 was the coming to America of Jenny Lind, the "Swedish Nightingale," or the "Queen of Song," as she was often called.

Jenny Lind was born at Stockholm, Sweden, in 1820. Her parents were very poor. In fact her father was not very industrious and her mother was obliged to earn most of the living by teaching.

Jenny was a lovable child, with sparkling blue eyes and yellow wavy hair, though she was not considered beautiful. She was a singer almost from infancy, and when at play

she sang with the gayety of a bird. Long afterwards she said of her childhood: "I sang with every step I took and with every jump my feet made." She had a pet cat with a blue ribbon around its neck, and she sang to the cat hour after hour.

One day as she sat singing to her cat a lady from the Royal Opera House was passing by and heard the sweet, birdlike voice from the window of their humble cottage. She was struck with the marvelous sweetness of the child-voice, the most wonderful she had ever heard. She made the acquaintance of the family, and said to Mrs. Lind that her daughter should by all means be educated for the stage.

Mrs. Lind, however, had a prejudice against the stage and would not give her consent. But it was afterwards arranged that Jenny be educated at the expense of the Government. After several years of hard study and severe training, she made her *début* at the Royal Opera, at Stockholm, as a public singer. It was March 7, 1838, and all her life thereafter she held this date in sacred memory. She was timid and by no means sure of success when she went before the great audience that assembled to hear her, but after the first note all fear was gone. She knew her power. Years afterwards she said: "I got up that morning one creature; I went to bed another creature. I had found my power." The people were wild with enthusiasm over her wonderful voice, and her fame soon spread to foreign lands. In the great cities of Europe, Berlin, Vienna, London, she was called to sing and the crowds that gathered blocked the streets for many squares. No greater reception could have been given a queen.

Not only was Jenny Lind the greatest singer of her age; she was also a woman of the noblest and purest type. It was said that she had the manners of a princess, the sim-

plicity of a child, and the goodness of an angel. She earned vast sums of money and gave much more than half of it to the poor. She was a devout Lutheran, and her religion was deep as life itself. She declared that she took more pleasure in giving her money to the needy than in receiving the applause of the multitudes. Mendelssohn, the great composer, declared that he had never met in his life so noble, so true and real an art nature as Jenny Lind. Hans Christian Andersen, the famous fable writer, said that through Jenny Lind he first became sensible to the holiness of art.

The fame of this great singer spread to America and Mr. P. T. Barnum secured her services for a tour of the United States. Barnum was noted for his humbugs, but in this instance he did a true service for the American people. Vast crowds of people lined the streets of New York City to greet the wonderful singer when she first landed. The tickets for the first concert were sold at auction, and some of them brought more than \$600. Jenny's share of the first concert amounted to \$10,000, and she gave every dollar of it to the charities of the city.

As she proceeded from city to city the people gathered in uncounted thousands to see her pass along the streets and her concert halls were always packed. In Rochester, New York, there were some who bought standing room in a building across the street from the concert hall. It was said that any one who heard the voice of Jenny Lind continued to hear it ring in his ears to the end of his life. There was a pathetic something in her voice that moved an audience to tears — not tears of sadness, but of emotion.

The great kindness of heart of Jenny Lind and her deep religious nature were as remarkable as her singing. In America she not only gave a great stimulus to the study of music, she also left a chain of charities wherever she went.

She loved to help the poor whenever she could. Many are the stories of her kindness. Here are a few:

In Boston a working girl came to the ticket office, threw down three dollars and said, "There goes half a month's savings, but I must hear Jenny Lind." The ticket agent told Jenny of the incident and she asked if he would know the girl again when he saw her. He answered that he would, and she said, "Please, then, give her this twenty-dollar bill for me."

At Bath, England, she saw an aged woman at the door of an almshouse and spoke to her, as she often did to the unfortunate. The woman said, "I have lived a long time in the world, and I desire nothing before I die but to hear Jenny Lind."

"And would it really make you happy?" asked the stranger.

"Aye, that it would, but poor folks such as us can't go to the playhouse, and I shall never see her."

"Don't be so sure of that. Let us go into the house." As they entered and sat down Jenny sang one of her sweetest songs. The old lady was moved to tears and her visitor said, "Now you have heard Jenny Lind," and took her departure.

In one city she heard of a young man who had intended to attend her concert, but fell sick and could not do so. She made a long journey through the city to find him. She found him lying on a couch and his wife sitting by. She introduced herself and told them her errand. She had come to sing for them — and did so.

Jenny Lind's share of her earnings in America reached about \$175,000, most of which she gave away. The American school children presented her with a beautiful patchwork quilt. This she admired very much and declared that



she wished to have it buried with her. She spent the last years of her life in England, singing only now and then, always for charity, spending most of her time in religious work among the poor and wretched. Her beautiful life came to a close in 1887, and the patchwork quilt, which she had kept nearly forty years, was buried with her, as she had requested.

#### LOUIS KOSSUTH

Another foreigner visited our shores in 1851 and attracted almost as much attention as Jenny Lind — Louis Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot. Kossuth was born in 1802 and was of noble descent. While still a young man he became widely known as an unselfish and fearless advocate of reform in politics.

Hungary was oppressed by the Austrian Government and Kossuth denounced the oppression with overpowering eloquence. He was thrown into prison by the tyrants who ruled over his country, because he was a lover of liberty and had the courage to say so. For three years he languished in prison and on his release he again took up the cause of his people.

The year 1848 was a notable year in Europe. There were revolutions (risings of the people for change of government) in various countries and among them was Hungary. The people of that country determined to throw off the Austrian yoke, and one of the leaders of this movement was Louis Kossuth. He was then a member of the Hungarian Diet, or Congress. He declared with burning eloquence that his people must strike a blow for independence and they did. Kossuth was made dictator with absolute power. He soon had a large army in the field — too large to be overcome by the Austrians. It seemed that Hungary was about to win its entire independence, and this would have made Kossuth a

Washington in history. But at this point Austria called on Russia for aid and the Czar sent a great army against the Hungarians.

Thus ended the hopes of Hungarian independence. Kossuth fled from his native land and took refuge in Turkey. The Austrian Government demanded that the Sultan of Turkey give up Kossuth. The object was to bring him back and put him to death for treason and rebellion.

Strange it seems to us that a man who gives his life to the cause of liberty should be the object of persecution in any country. When Austria and Russia demanded that this noble man be given over to the hands of his deadly enemies, England and the United States became interested and encouraged the Sultan not to yield. President Fillmore then invited Kossuth to visit America and sent a Government vessel to bring him. Austria did not like such a proceeding, of course, but the American people did not care whether Austria liked it or not.

Kossuth first went to England, where he was received with the highest honor by all classes of society. He then crossed the Atlantic and reached the United States in December, 1851. No other foreigner, except Lafayette and Jenny Lind, had ever received such an ovation as that given to Kossuth. People recalled the dark days of our own Revolution, when our fathers had fought in the glorious cause of liberty and won, while Kossuth had failed. The heart of the nation went out to him. The streets of the cities were thronged with multitudes wherever he went. Kossuth hats and Kossuth overcoats became the fashionable craze.

In New York a great street parade was preceded by a mass meeting at Castle Garden and followed by an immense banquet, presided over by William Cullen Bryant, the poet. Kossuth visited many cities and in each he addressed large

crowds of people. He was a man of wonderful eloquence, and he spoke the English language as fluently as his own.

But in the end his visit was a disappointment. His great object was to enlist the aid of our Government in defending down-trodden Hungary. Such a course would have been against our policy, as laid down in Washington's proclamation of neutrality. Our course had always been to take no part in the wars and broils of Europe which did not concern our interests, and we could not make an exception in the case of Hungary. Kossuth had a long talk about the matter with Henry Clay and other leading statesmen, but received little encouragement.

After spending several months in America, the great Hungarian returned to Europe, but not to his own land. He made his home in Turin, in northern Italy. Here he spent the evening of his life, studying and writing on the subject of human government, the undying flame of liberty ever burning in his soul. He died in 1894 at the great age of ninety-two years.

The career of this grand old man was by no means a failure. He was an example to the world of a high-born patriot to whom liberty was dearer than life itself. And further, it was largely through his efforts and principles that Hungary later secured a larger degree of liberty than she enjoyed at the time of his exile.

#### LEWIS CASS

Though not well known to the ordinary reader of to-day, Lewis Cass was in his day one of the most prominent men in America. Like many of our leading men he was a descendant of ancestors who came to New England early in our colonial period. His father served under Washington and was in nearly all the battles fought on northern soil.

He married and settled in Exeter, New Hampshire, in 1781, and the following year Lewis was born.

In after years Lewis said to his friends that he literally saw the United States born. It will be remembered that the framers of the Constitution decided that it should go into operation if nine states ratified it, and New Hampshire was the ninth state to do so.

"It was in the summer of 1788," said Cass, "that New Hampshire ratified the Constitution, and the day was one of great rejoicing by the people. My mother held me in her arms at a window from which I saw the bonfires in the streets and heard the shouts of the people."

In the early nineties Mr. Cass left his little family for a time to serve in the Indian wars in Ohio, under General Anthony Wayne. Here he, like many another, became fascinated with the attractions of the frontier; he went back to New Hampshire and moved with his family to Ohio. Lewis was a lad of seventeen when he came to Marietta and joined the colony that had been founded by Rufus Putnam. Here he soon began the study of law.

The family moved up the Muskingum and located on a farm near Zanesville. Lewis also came to that city, then a little frontier village, with streets lined with stumps and underbrush, and began the practice of his profession. He was the first lawyer to be admitted to the bar in the newly formed State of Ohio. The frontier lawyer in those days had no easy time. Frequently Lewis Cass traveled on horseback or on foot through the forest to some distant county seat to try a case. He also spent much of his time on his father's farm. One day a friend from the East came to see him and found him pounding corn in a hollow stump near his father's door. In the absence of a mill the pioneer would reduce his corn to meal in this way.

Lewis Cass was elected to the state legislature while still a very young man, and an occasion soon arose by which he attracted national attention. It was at this time that Aaron Burr was hatching his plot along the Ohio River to sever the Union, as was believed, and to set up a new nation in the West. And it was Cass who drew up a resolution in the legislature, which was passed, to seize Burr's boats at the mouth of the Muskingum. This was done by the state militia, and President Thomas Jefferson acknowledged that it was the first blow struck against Burr's conspiracy.

President Jefferson did not forget the part played by young Cass in the legislature and soon afterwards appointed him a United States marshal.

A few years later came the War of 1812. Early in the spring of that year Ohio raised three regiments of soldiers and Lewis Cass was made a general and put in command of one of them. He was sent North with his regiment to join General Hull, who was in command of Detroit. A few days earlier a little vessel, steaming up the Detroit River to bring provisions to Hull, was captured by the British, who occupied Fort Malden on the east bank of the river. It was decided to send a man from Detroit to the British fort to ask for the release of the prisoners who had been captured with the American vessel.

General Cass was chosen for the task. He crossed the river and approached the British fort bearing a flag of truce. Met by the guards, he was asked what was his errand. He told them and they blindfolded him and led him within the fort to the commanding officer. A custom of warfare is to blindfold a man who goes on an errand within the enemy's lines, so that he cannot carry any important information back to his people.

Cass was not successful in securing the release of the



prisoners, and soon after his return to Detroit the American army crossed the river to attack Fort Malden. Cass and the other young officers were very eager for the attack, but Hull seemed afraid, and after hovering about for a few days, led his army back to Detroit. Cass was filled with disgust at such action, and this was increased tenfold when, a short time afterwards, Hull surrendered Detroit and all Michigan to the British, without striking a blow.<sup>1</sup> Cass declared that he would never hand over his sword to a British officer and broke it across a stone.

When the people of Ohio and Kentucky heard of the disgraceful surrender they were furious, and the young men volunteered in such numbers that they could not all be accepted in the army. The result was that the British could hold Michigan but little more than a year, when it came again in the possession of the United States. General Cass was then appointed Governor of Michigan, and he held the position for eighteen years.

A more vigorous governor than General Cass proved to be could not be found. Many of the settlers were French and their methods of farming were so crude that they were on the point of starvation half the time and Congress had to appropriate money to aid them. Cass did all in his power to induce more American settlers to come to Michigan; but in some way the people of the East had come to believe that Michigan was a barren, uninhabitable country, and few would venture to remove thither. This false impression kept Michigan back for many years, but when the people discovered the truth, that southern Michigan was one of the finest farming regions in the United States, they settled there in large numbers and in 1837 Michigan became a state of the Union.

<sup>1</sup> See page 152.

While governor of the territory, Cass had to deal with Indian tribes on all sides. He made many treaties with them and usually kept them in a friendly spirit. He made many long journeys through the wilderness to learn about the country and to make himself acquainted with the wants of the natives. He was borne across lake and stream in Indian canoes, and often he spent the night in their wigwams and ate of their scanty meals. On one of these trips he went far into the Northwest, almost to the source of the Mississippi. On this tour he had an exciting experience.

Near the head of Lake Michigan Cass wished to make a treaty with an Indian tribe; but the tribe was hostile and claimed allegiance to England. In a long parley with the chiefs Cass told them that they were on American soil and that he intended to place a garrison there. The chiefs were angry. They withdrew and after a short consultation came out of their tents and raised a British flag in an open place in view of Cass and his party. This meant defiance, and an attack was imminent. Cass now did a bold thing. He walked unarmed right to the British flag, hauled it down, and trampled on it. The Indians were so amazed at so brave an act by a man whose party numbered scarcely one tenth of their own that they could not attack him. In fact they signed the treaty just as he dictated it. For years afterwards the members of Cass's party told of this deed as the bravest they had ever witnessed.

But we must hurry on. So honest and so able had the governorship of Cass been that he was called higher. In 1831 he became Secretary of War in the Cabinet of President Jackson. Here he served with much ability for five years. But his health began to decline. He had spent many years in the active, wild life of the Michigan forests and now he found the confining office work in Washington irksome.

Twice he offered to resign from the Cabinet, but the President refused to let him go. But in 1836 he determined to leave the Cabinet and President Jackson offered to make him Minister to France. This offer he accepted, and in the autumn of that year he arrived in Paris. Here he remained for several years and became an intimate friend of the French king. While in Paris, Cass wrote a very interesting book entitled *France, its King, Court, and Government*.

When General Cass returned to the United States, in 1842, he was received with much popular applause in Boston, New York, and other cities. He had become one of the most popular leaders in the nation and was widely spoken of for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency in 1844. But Mr. Polk of Tennessee was nominated and Cass entered the United States Senate. In that body he became a leader from the start, and before the next four years had passed he was looked upon as the leading Democrat of the country.

In 1848 he was nominated for the Presidency, but owing to the great popularity of old "Rough-and-Ready" Zachary Taylor, Cass was defeated. He continued in the Senate nearly ten years longer, when he was called in 1857 to enter the Cabinet of President Buchanan. This was his last public service, after which he retired to Detroit to spend his final years, where he had spent so much of his young manhood. He was a stanch friend of the Union during the Civil War and rejoiced at its close that the country was not divided. He died in 1866 at the age of eighty-four years.

Four years after Cass's defeat for President in 1848 he had again been urged for the nomination, but was defeated in convention by Franklin Pierce.

## JAMES BUCHANAN

One of our Presidents who cannot be placed in the highest rank was James Buchanan. For more than forty years Mr. Buchanan had been in public life when he was nominated for the highest office in the land, in 1856. He was born in a cabin in 1791 near Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, on the eastern slope of the Allegheny Mountains, in a "romantic spot where the towering summits rose grandly all around."

James's father was Scotch-Irish, he had come to America after the Revolution, had married a farmer's daughter, and settled in this lonely spot. When James was eight years old the family moved to the town of Mercersburg, where James was placed in school. He was a bright boy and learned rapidly. At the age of fourteen he was sent to Dickinson College, at Carlisle. At college he showed unusual talent and had no superior in application to his studies. In 1809 he was graduated with the highest honors of his class. Three years later he became a lawyer and settled in Lancaster. Here he rose in his profession and soon became one of the leading lawyers in Pennsylvania.

In 1820, James Buchanan was elected to Congress from his district and was reelected regularly until he had served ten years. In Congress he was faithful and industrious, but never spectacular. When General Jackson became President he appointed Mr. Buchanan Minister to Russia, where he remained four years and returned to the United States.

Almost immediately after his return he was elected to the United States Senate. As a debater in the Senate he was always to be found on the side of President Jackson. He was a strong debater, but was not a great national leader, as compared with Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, or John C. Calhoun.

When James K. Polk became President, in 1845, he chose Mr. Buchanan for the foremost place in his Cabinet, that of Secretary of State. In this office Buchanan served during the whole of Polk's administration.

The Secretary of State had control, under the direction of the President, of all foreign relations, and during these four years there were several great questions to be settled. One of these was the making of the treaty with Mexico at the close of the war, and another was the settling of the Oregon boundary with England. Buchanan managed these matters with much ability and to the satisfaction of everyone.

When Franklin Pierce became President he appointed Mr. Buchanan Minister to England and for the next four years he made his home in London. Here he enjoyed life and was very popular in the high political and social circles of the British metropolis.

But with all the high positions filled by James Buchanan up to this time, he was to enjoy still higher honors. When his party was ready to choose a candidate for President in 1856, it turned spontaneously to Buchanan.

The fierce conflicts of the preceding four years had weakened every other leading Democrat; but Buchanan, being absent from the country, had not suffered from this cause and his popularity was not diminished. He was nominated by the convention and the newly founded Republican party nominated John C. Fremont for President.

Buchanan won in the election and the next four years he spent in the White House in Washington. He was a bachelor, and the mistress of the White House during the four years was his accomplished niece, his adopted daughter, Harriet Lane. While he was Minister to England she was always with him and by her wit and beauty she attracted much attention. Queen Victoria showed special preference



to Miss Lane. In Paris and other cities where she went with her uncle she was called the girl queen. Oxford University bestowed on Mr. Buchanan the degree of Doctor of Laws (the poet Tennyson received the degree the same day), and when Miss Lane entered the hall the whole student body rose and cheered.

In the White House, Harriet Lane came near reaching the social height attained by the famous Dolly Madison. Warships, societies, articles of apparel and ornamentation were given her name. It has been said, and is probably true, that no other young woman in the country had ever received equal honor with Harriet Lane. While she was mistress of the White House the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII of England, visited this country and was entertained by the President and his accomplished niece. And he spoke highly of the charming grace of his popular hostess.

But notwithstanding all this, the Presidency of Mr. Buchanan was not very successful. The great slavery subject, including the troubles in "Bleeding Kansas," kept the country in a turmoil, and President Buchanan, though a northern man, generally gave his sympathies to the slaveholders. When the southern states began to secede from the Union, Buchanan was in a dilemma. He quibbled and hesitated, not knowing what to do, and thus he lost the respect of both sides. But when the war broke out, after his term of office was over, he was heartily in favor of saving the Union at any cost.

#### HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

The most popular book ever written in America was written by a woman. The woman was Harriet Beecher Stowe and the book was *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. She was born

in Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1811. Her father was the famous preacher, Lyman Beecher, and her brother was the more famous Henry Ward Beecher.

When Harriet was but four years old a great sorrow, the death of her mother, came into her young life. In after years she fondly recounted the few little incidents about her mother which she remembered. Among other things she remembered was the funeral — the weeping friends in mourning, the subdued conversation, the uncontrollable grief of her father, the black hearse with its nodding plumes that bore the loved one away to her last resting place. Little Henry Ward was too young to understand, and he continued his innocent, frolicking play in ignorant joy.

Mrs. Beecher left several sons, and her wish that all of them enter the ministry was carried out. And they all testified in later life that all through their childhood and youth they were strengthened against the temptations of evil by the sacred memory of their departed mother.

Soon after her mother's death Harriet was taken by an aunt to her home for a long stay. They traveled all day in a wagon and arrived after dark at a little white farmhouse. This was to be her home for many months. Here she listened every evening to the broken voice of her good, white-haired grandmother reading from her Bible and prayer book; here, with the coming of spring, she strolled over the grassy fields and sand hills, as happy as the birds which she imitated in their songs of gladness.

At length Harriet was taken back to her home at Litchfield, and two years after her mother's death she had a stepmother, whom she described in later years as a sweet, lovable woman, a true mother in every respect. Harriet was sent to the academy in Litchfield as soon as she was old enough to be admitted, and at the age of twelve she wrote

an essay, which was read at a public exhibition. The subject was certainly an unusual one for a child: "Can the Immortality of the Soul Be Proved from the Light of Nature?" Her father, who was present at the reading, could scarcely believe that his little daughter had written it.

Sometimes, in the golden October days Harriet accompanied her father and brothers on long excursions to the woods to gather nuts, and sometimes to a fishing lake where she was often as successful as they and on her return home displayed her string of fish in triumph to everyone she saw.

Of books Harriet had few in girlhood. Her father was a Puritan of the strict kind, and his library contained little aside from learned works on theology. Harriet one day found an old copy of *The Arabian Nights*, a treasure that gave her many a day of entertainment.

Sir Walter Scott was at this time writing his novels, but few of the Puritans approved of reading novels of any kind and at first Sir Walter was barred from the Beecher home. But one day Dr. Beecher said to his children:

"You may read Scott's novels, if you like. I have always disapproved of novels as trash, but in these there are real genius and culture. Yes, you may read them."

And they did read them. In one summer the Beecher children went through *Ivanhoe* seven times.

Lord Byron was a prominent British poet at this time. Harriet one day came in possession of "The Corsair," one of his poems, and for many hours she entertained herself with it. Dr. Beecher was also a great admirer of Byron's genius, and when the word came that Byron had died in Greece, the family was deeply moved. "Oh, I'm sorry Byron is dead! I did hope he would live to do something for Christ," said Dr. Beecher. He also expressed deep regret that he could not have seen the poet while he lived and

presented to him his views of religious truth. This deep religious conviction, coupled with admiration for genius, pervaded the whole Beecher family.

When Harriet was about fourteen she was sent to Hartford to school. She began the study of Latin and within a year she translated some of the poems of Ovid into English verse. The work was considered very creditable and was read publicly at the final exhibition. She also wrote a drama at this time which showed great maturity of mind for one of her age. She was at this period intensely anxious to become a poet.

After fifteen years' service in Litchfield, her father was called to a prominent church in Boston. Here he remained but six years, when he was called to Cincinnati, Ohio, to become president of Lane Seminary, just founded in that city. Harriet went also to Cincinnati with the family intending to teach school. They went by stage to Wheeling, where they took a river boat to their new place of abode. They moved into a house on Walnut Hills, now one of the fine residence sections of the city. Of the house in which they lived Harriet wrote to a friend in Connecticut: "The house we are at present inhabiting is the most inconvenient, ill-arranged, good for nothing, and altogether to be execrated affair that was ever put together."

Harriet was soon busy teaching in the Queen City, but it was not long before she found her true occupation. The *Western Magazine* offered a prize of fifty dollars for the best story; she entered the contest and won easily. From this time she wrote many short stories and sketches. One of her dearest friends in Cincinnati was Mrs. Eliza Stowe, a bright young woman of about her own age and wife of Professor Calvin E. Stowe; and with her and her learned husband Harriet spent many a happy hour.

In 1834, after two years in her new home, Harriet Beecher made a trip to New England to see her brother, Henry Ward, graduate at Amherst College. When she returned to the West she found Professor Stowe in the deepest sorrow. His young wife had died. Harriet extended to him her genuine sympathy and it seemed to relieve his loneliness to talk with her, the bosom friend of his departed wife. Their friendship grew and two years later they were married. Thus Harriet Beecher took the name of Harriet Beecher Stowe, the name by which she became known throughout the world. Soon after his marriage Professor Stowe was chosen by the Ohio legislature to go to Europe to study the school systems abroad for the benefit of the public schools of Ohio. He answered the summons, and, not able to take his young wife with him, they were separated for a time.

It was about this time that Mrs. Stowe began seriously to study the slavery question. Just across the Ohio from Cincinnati was Kentucky, a slave state, and she had been a guest on a large estate where she saw many phases of slave life. One of the students of Lane Seminary had lectured in the South against slavery and had made some converts. Among them was James G. Birney, who freed his slaves, moved to Cincinnati, and started an anti-slavery paper. The sympathizers with slavery in Cincinnati were very numerous, and they incited a mob which broke into Mr. Birney's printing office and destroyed his press. Mrs. Stowe had received runaway slaves into her own home; she had heard the woeful cry of an oppressed race, and all these things had sunk deeply into her soul.

Now came a change in the life of Mr. and Mrs. Stowe. Several children had been born to them and their salary was too small to make ends meet. For seventeen years Professor Stowe had served Lane Seminary, then came a call to a



professorship from Bowdoin College, at Brunswick, Maine, from which he had graduated. He accepted and moved East.

It was soon after reaching Brunswick that the great life-work of Mrs. Stowe began — the writing of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Amid many household cares the story shaped itself in her mind and was written in weekly installments and first published as a serial in the *National Era* of Washington. It came out in book form in March, 1852. Within a few days ten thousand copies were sold and more than three hundred thousand within a year.

Soon after the book was published Mrs. Stowe was in Brooklyn, at the home of her brother, Henry Ward Beecher. Jenny Lind was again singing in New York. Hearing of Mrs. Stowe's presence, she sent her an autographed note, enclosing tickets to her concert. Mrs. Stowe answered in a note of thanks and a copy of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. She attended the concert and afterwards wrote of the great Swedish singer: "We have heard Jenny Lind, and the affair was a bewildering dream of sweetness and beauty. . . . She had the artless grace of a little child, the poetic effect of a wood nymph. . . . She is a noble creature."

In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* we have a picture of slave life, of an institution of the past, that can be found nowhere else. Who can read of the pathetic life and death of Uncle Tom and of little Eva, of the brutal Legree, of the philosophic indolence of St. Clair, of the irrepressible Topsy — who can read these characters as Mrs. Stowe sketched them and ever forget the picture?

The book sold rapidly in England and public meetings were held in many English towns and addresses adopted and sent to the author. The book was translated into every modern European language and was sold by the hundred

thousands. Mrs. Stowe wrote many other books, but none to compare with this in popularity. She made several trips to Europe and was received with high honors in every class of society. She rejoiced to see the downfall of slavery and received many congratulations for the part she had played in bringing freedom to a downtrodden race.

Mrs. Stowe lived to a serene old age, dying in 1896 at the age of eighty-five years. Her last years were spent in Hartford, Connecticut, and in Florida where also she maintained a home.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

THE "Underground Railroad" was not a real railroad, under nor above ground. The term was used to designate the system of giving aid to slaves escaping from their masters. The historic interest in the subject rests, not so much on what was done by its operation, as on the index it furnishes to popular feeling at the North on the slavery question. Under this heading we shall also notice the famous Fugitive Slave Law and its working.

It is difficult for us to realize in this generation how great was the agitation of the people throughout the country on the slavery question, during the decade immediately preceding the Civil War. The abolition sentiment at the North, led by Benjamin Lundy, William Lloyd Garrison, E. P. Lovejoy, Joshua R. Giddings, and others, had begun to make itself felt away back in the thirties. The Liberty party made its appearance in national politics in 1840. It cast but seven thousand votes that year, but four years later its vote exceeded sixty thousand; and while the party, as such, never played a great part in the nation's affairs, its steady growth and the principles it infused in the greater political organizations showed plainly the direction in which the political wind was blowing. The South became alarmed at the spread of abolition feeling in the North. Calhoun, the great champion of the slave power, foresaw the threatened dangers, and he solemnly called upon the North to suppress the spreading evil, predicting the gravest conse-

quences if this were not done. But, with all his prophetic vision, the great slavery champion made one serious miscalculation. He was right when he said that if the moral consciousness of a majority of the people opposed slavery, slavery must fall; but he was wrong in believing that human legislation can govern the conscience of the people.

As stated in a former chapter, the admission of California as a free state offended the South; but there was another measure in that famous mid-century legislation that met with still greater opposition and became a more potent factor in bringing about a final crisis that followed ten years later. This time it was the North that was offended, and the law that caused the offence is known as

#### THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

The first Fugitive Slave Law was passed in 1793. The Constitution of the United States had, in Article IV, Section II, provided for the delivering up of persons bound to service, escaping from one state into another. The law of 1793 was, therefore, constitutional, and it remained in force and unchanged for more than half a century, when it was supplanted by the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. This law of 1850 was, to say the least, a vicious measure; the old law, hard as it was upon the black man, was now changed for the worse. The South as a whole cannot be said to have been responsible for this inhuman law. It was forced upon the country by a class of slaveholders who were exasperated at the loss of California, and who now demanded, as a partial compensation, that the Fugitive Slave Law be enacted and accepted by the North. It was supported also by many of the milder type of southern men, such as Henry Clay, and by some from the North, not because they believed it a good thing in itself, but because they believed it necessary to yield thus far to

the demands of the South for the sake of peace between the two great sections of the country.

President Millard Fillmore, on September 18, 1850, signed the Fugitive Slave Law, and by this act, more than by any other, he is remembered in American history. By this act he covered his name with dishonor, and no subsequent show of patriotism could efface it. The storm of protest that came from his own section was fierce and uncontrollable, and the name of Fillmore was inseparably linked with the offensive law. In signing that bill, it has been said, the President signed his own death-warrant as a national statesman; and yet it is difficult to see how he could have avoided doing what he did without bringing on the country a greater disaster, for the temper of the South was such that a rejection of the law would no doubt have resulted in the immediate secession of some or all of the slave states. And secession at that time would probably have resulted in a dissolution of the Union.

The Fugitive Slave Law was inhuman and unjust. This we say in all candor and without partisan bias; and there is every reason to believe that any intelligent American citizen of to-day, whether from the North or from the South, will subscribe to the same thing. The old Roman law gave the benefit of the doubt to the slave,<sup>1</sup> but our own law in this nineteenth century took a step backward from pagan Rome, and so arranged its provisions that the ignorant black man had no means of defending his own cause.

The act had scarcely become a law when some parts of the North were overrun by man-hunters. These were not usually the owners of the alleged runaway slaves, but their agents — often coarse, brutal men whose better instincts had been smothered by years of slave-driving. The

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, *History of the United States, 1850-1896*, Vol. I, p. 186..



law empowered these men, not only to capture and bring to trial any negro they might suspect of being the fugitive sought, but also to call, through the aid of officers, on any bystanders to assist in making the capture, and to impose a penalty for refusal.

The trial of the negro was little more than a farce. The agent took him before a commissioner, appointed for the purpose, and made oath that he was the one sought. No jury was required. The black man could not testify in his own behalf. The law was against him in every way; even the commissioner was bribed by it, for if he decided in favor of the agent he received ten dollars as his fee, and but half that sum if he discharged the negro.

It was evident that such a law could do little but irritate all true lovers of justice. At the North it was received by the great majority of the people with every demonstration of disapproval. Great meetings were held in the cities throughout the North, and the Fugitive Slave Law was denounced in unmeasured terms as a violation of the Constitution of the United States and of the laws of God. From thousands of pulpits the law was denounced as an unjust and wicked measure.<sup>1</sup>

On two grounds it was claimed that this law was unconstitutional. First, it denied trial by jury, while the seventh amendment to the Constitution guarantees the right of trial by jury "when the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars." (The slaveholder evaded this by claiming that there was no controversy between persons, since the slave was only a piece of property, and had no rights before the law.) Second, it was an *ex post facto* law, as applied to slaves who had escaped before its passage, and all *ex post facto* laws are forbidden by the Constitution.

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power*, Vol. II, p. 305.

There were some twenty thousand negroes in the North who had escaped from bondage before the law was passed, many of whom had lived in the North for many years, had married and settled down to a quiet, industrious life. All of these were subject to the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850; if found by the owner or his agent they could be seized, torn from their families, and carried back to the South.

The most objectionable feature of this law to the northern mind was found in the clause that made it compulsory for a citizen to aid the slave hunter in capturing his prey. Thousands of people in the North believed that a man held in bondage for no crime — simply on account of the color of his skin and the accident of his birth — had a right to escape, if he could, and their impulse was to aid him if it lay in their power; but the command of the law was that they must aid his pursuer, regardless of feeling and conscience in the matter. The burning question then arose in the minds of many: Shall we obey the laws of our country or the higher law of conscience? With a large number the decision was for the latter; they determined to resist the law without regard to results. Anyone can readily see with what extreme difficulty a law can be enforced when opposed by the moral consciousness of a large portion of the people in the midst of whom it is expected to operate.

#### THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW IN OPERATION

There can be no better way of showing the reader how the Fugitive Slave Law worked than to cite a few examples of its practical application.

One of the first instances to attract attention was the case of William Smith of Columbia, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Smith was a colored man who had escaped from slavery long before, and had lived quietly in Columbia

for several years with his wife and children. One day, while working on the street, he saw a slave catcher approaching him, and, attempting to escape, he was shot dead.

Another instance, occurring in the same county in 1851, turned out differently and attracted far wider attention. A man named Gorsuch, from Baltimore County, Maryland, with his son and several friends, came into the county in search of two fugitives who had escaped three years previously. The party, all well armed, found their prey near the little town of Christiana. The negroes had taken refuge in an old house, where, with several friends of their own color, they determined to fight for their freedom, the fugitives declaring that they would rather die than go back into slavery. A horn was blown as a signal to the colored people of the neighborhood, and in a short time a large number, armed with guns, axes, and clubs, had collected. Two white men also appeared, and were called on by the officer in charge to assist in making the arrest. This they indignantly refused to do. They belonged to the Society of Friends, and the Friends were ever vigilant in assisting the slave when possible.

The Gorsuch party demanded the surrender of the fugitives, and, on being refused, they opened fire. The fire was returned; Gorsuch was killed and his son severely wounded. President Fillmore soon afterward sent a large body of officers to the scene to arrest the offenders. Several men were brought to trial for resisting the law, but the moral sentiment in Pennsylvania rendered conviction extremely difficult, and no punishments followed. The two fugitives were never captured.

On numerous occasions fugitives were caught and carried back to the South; but the temper of the northern people was such that it was no easy task to enforce the law, and the

fugitive was usually able to evade the slave hunter; this was sometimes accomplished by the aid of men who defied the law and forcibly rescued the negro. This is well illustrated in the case of the "Jerry rescue" at Syracuse, New York. In October, 1851, a mulatto named Jerry McHenry, an industrious mechanic of Syracuse, being claimed by a man from Missouri as his former slave, was captured and imprisoned to await trial. Early in the evening twenty or thirty men, led by Gerrit Smith, a wealthy, great-hearted man, and the Rev. Samuel May, a man of unwonted courage, determined to rescue Jerry. With the utmost coolness they proceeded to the police-office, overpowered the officer, battered down the door, rescued the prisoner, and placed him in a carriage. After some days' concealment in the city, Jerry was sent to Canada, where the laws of England made him a free man.

The case of Anthony Burns of Boston attracted national attention and became the most famous of all the captures under the detested law. Burns was a colored waiter in a Boston hotel. He was a runaway from Virginia, and was captured by the slave hunters in May, 1854. In a short time the city was in an uproar concerning Burns, who was confined in the court-house, the laws of the state prohibiting the use of the jail for such a purpose. The New England sense of justice was deeply offended, and the people acted on the principle laid down by Senator Charles Sumner that they would not permit a man who had lived peaceably among them for several years to be dragged back into slavery.

An excited meeting was held at Faneuil Hall and was addressed by Wendell Phillips and Theodore Parker. Late at night this meeting resolved itself into a mob, and the men that composed it proceeded to the court-house determined to

rescue Burns if in their power. Here they found a crowd of colored men already battering at the courthouse doors. The militia was called out and the mob driven back. One man was killed. The prisoner was not rescued, and the city remained like a seething ocean all night. When Burns' trial came off, he was awarded to the claimant. He was marched through the streets of the city guarded by several hundred armed soldiers. No further attempt at his rescue was made, but the streets were lined with an excited multitude, hissing and jeering and threatening. The prisoner was landed in a vessel waiting at the wharf, and it was soon steaming away bearing him back to the bondage from which he had escaped.

Anthony Burns' experience had so profoundly stirred public feeling in Massachusetts that it was not difficult to raise a purse for his purchase. This was done, and his owner being induced to sell him, he was purchased, brought back to the North, and sent to Oberlin College in Ohio, where a few years later he died.

#### WORKING OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The system of giving aid and comfort to runaway slaves had its origin in the early part of the century, and later came to be known as the Underground Railroad. The term was first used in this sense at Columbia, Pennsylvania. Most of the people of this town were in sympathy with the slave, and when a fugitive arrived here, he was hidden or spirited away by them. The slave hunters would track their property as far as Columbia, when they lost all trace or sign, and they declared that "there must be an underground railroad somewhere."<sup>1</sup>

The system was for many years before the Civil War carefully organized, had its regular stations twenty miles or

<sup>1</sup> Walton and Brumbaugh, *Stories of Pennsylvania*, p. 271.



more apart, and did most of its work in secret. A Vigilance Committee in Philadelphia, composed of the best citizens, received the fugitives who came to that city, and furnished hundreds of them with free tickets to Canada.

The belief of many northern people that the average slave owner was a hard and cruel master was incorrect. Many of the slaves in the South were treated with kindness by their masters and had little desire for freedom; others were content to remain in bondage because of their gross ignorance. But with a large number — especially those who had picked up the rudiments of an education — there was that longing for liberty so natural to the human heart. Others were driven to seek their liberty by cruel treatment, and still others because of their fear of the dreadful auction block. However humane the slave owner might be, however foreign it was from his intention to part with any of his servants, his sudden death or business reverses might at any time land them on the auction block for the southern market; and the most dreadful thing that could happen to the slave of the border states was to be “sold to Georgia” or “sold down the river” to supply the great plantations in the South. When once a black was sold to a “trader,” and carried to the far South, he was seldom seen or heard of again by his friends and kindred. Such a separation of families and the system that produced it can be condoned only on the assumption that the negro is devoid of those finer feelings, those ties of consanguinity, so characteristic of our own race.

Thousands of slaves in whose bosoms burned a longing for liberty were too timid or too ignorant to make an attempt to escape. They all knew that freedom lay in the direction of the North Star, but further than this the majority knew nothing, except that the distance was vast and that the way was fraught with unknown perils. Nevertheless,

for many years before the war, an average of about a thousand slaves each year escaped from their masters into the free states. The fugitives for the most part came from the border states, and comprised usually the most intelligent of the race.

Various methods were used by the slaves in effecting their escape. Some came from the far South, guided by the North Star or by the trend of a mountain range, secreting themselves during the day. Some were stowed away in steam-vessels, others rowed in open skiffs for hundreds of miles, thus eluding the keen-scented bloodhound and the more dreaded slave catcher. A few reached the North in boxes, sent as common merchandise. Women in male attire and men dressed in the garb of women succeeded in reaching the free states. In a few instances a slave with a fair skin and scarcely distinguishable from one of the dominant race would assume the habit and importance of the master and take the ordinary mode of conveyance.

Many northern people devoted their energies to aiding the negroes to escape. Thomas Garrett of Wilmington, Delaware, devoted fifty years of his life and all his modest fortune to the aid of runaways. When he was eighteen a free colored girl in his father's family had been kidnapped for the slave market. This incident determined his life work. At one time his fines for violating the law amounted to \$8000, and all his property had to be sold. But he soon got a new start and continued as before. In 1861, at the age of seventy-two, he said, "The war came too soon for my business. I wanted to help three thousand slaves to freedom, and I had only got up to twenty-seven hundred."

There were many lines of the Underground Railroad across New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, and a great many stopping places called stations. The negroes

usually traveled at night and in the daytime were hidden away at one of the stations -- a garret, a haymow, sometimes a coal mine. At Zanesville, Ohio, there was an opening in the stone pillar of a bridge across the Muskingum River in the darkness of which many a fugitive spent the day.

There was a young physician, a Canadian of Toronto, named Ross, who, on reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin* when it first came out, became deeply interested in the slaves, and he decided to give his life toward helping them to freedom. He made many trips to the South, even into the Gulf States. His plan was to go as a land agent, or a student of bird life. He would stay for some weeks at a place and quietly get acquainted with some of the better class of slaves. Then he would tell them about Canada and how to get there. For those who had the desire and the courage to make a dash for freedom he would fix a night for their departure and supply each one with a pocket compass so they might keep toward the north while traveling from one underground station to another. On his first trip Dr. Ross secured the escape of nine men, all of whom reached Canada.

Here is one of the narratives taken from Dr. Ross' book, published after the war. On a large plantation in Mississippi he became interested in a young slave named Joe and gave him full directions how to get to Canada. Joe's owner was one of those brutal "Legrees" who even burned his initials into the flesh of his slaves to make them more secure. Joe declared that he would rather die than remain longer with this man. He made his escape on a Saturday night.

Meantime suspicion began to be cast at Ross. He was put under arrest. At the head of a crowd, this "Legree" came to the hotel, pointed out the doctor and cried, "There's the man, the abolitionist, the nigger thief, arrest him." After spending a day or two in jail the doctor was brought

up for trial. It seemed that nothing but a miracle could save his life — and the miracle happened. A voice from the outside cried, "Here's Joe, here's Joe."

The doctor was released and he soon left town.<sup>1</sup> Joe made up a fine story. He told his master that he had gone to visit his brother ten miles away, that he expected to be back on Monday morning but sprained his ankle, and his story was accepted. The fact was that after Joe had escaped he heard that the doctor was in the toils of the law on his account and he decided to go back to the rescue of his benefactor. A few weeks later Joe did escape and found his way to Canada.

In all the record of the Underground Railroad no more romantic figure could be found than Harriet Tubman. She fled from bondage in Maryland in 1849 and reached Philadelphia. After having tasted the sweets of liberty, she decided to devote her life to rescuing others of her race.

After working a few months and laying by all her earnings, she would make an excursion into slave land, collect a small party of blacks and pilot them to Pennsylvania, sometimes all the way to Canada. In ten years she made nineteen such excursions and it seems strange indeed that she never was caught.

She could be firm when necessary and she allowed nothing to turn her aside from her purpose. While piloting one of her little crowds to Canada, one man lost courage and wanted to turn back. Harriet drew a revolver and said, "Dead niggers tell no tales; you go on or die."

Harriet Tubman attracted national attention. She visited the homes of Emerson and many other notables. Governor Seward of New York wrote, "I have known Har-

<sup>1</sup> During the Civil War Dr. Ross was President Lincoln's confidential agent in Canada.

riety long, and a nobler, higher, and truer spirit seldom dwells in human form." She came to be known as the Moses of her people.<sup>1</sup>

Anthony Blow was a Virginia slave, the property of a widow, and, on her death, was about to be transferred to her son-in-law, a young lawyer. Anthony was quite black, rather intelligent, and of a temperament that would not submit to the yoke of slavery. He had been shot on three occasions for refusing to be flogged. His new master decided to sell him to the traders as soon as he came in possession of him, and he taunted Anthony by frequently reminding him of this intention. But when the day of the auction arrived the negro was nowhere to be found, and the most diligent search for him proved unavailing. After concealing himself in the most unheard-of places, in which he almost suffered death, he found an opportunity to escape to the North. An employee on a steamship stowed him away in a narrow space directly over the boiler, where the heat was intolerable. He thought, however, that he could endure it for the two days required to reach Philadelphia. But the ship encountered a storm, was partially disabled, and eight days elapsed before she reached the northern port. At the end of this time the stowaway was more dead than alive; but, possessing a powerful frame and the best of health, and being used to suffering, he soon recovered under the fostering care of the Vigilance Committee.

The story of Alfred Thornton excited deep interest, as related by himself after reaching free soil. His master was a kind man and Alfred was his constant companion. No slave in the South was more contented with his lot than Alfred Thornton. But the master met with serious business embarrassment. One day as Alfred was at work he saw the

<sup>1</sup> Most of the following examples are taken from Still, *Underground Railroad*.



constable and a trader approaching him. He grew anxious as they came up, and when they took hold of him he understood all in an instant. He leaped from their grasp and ran with all the speed in his power to find his master. The trader fired two shots at him without effect. Finding his master, Alfred threw his arms about his neck, and cried, "Oh! Massa, have you sold me?" "Yes," was the answer. "To a trader?" "Yes." "Oh! Massa, Massa, why did you not sell me to some of the neighbors?" "I don't know," was the dry answer.

Alfred, now seeing the constable and trader approaching, released his hold and ran again. After running about a mile he leaped into a mill-pond, where he remained for two hours holding his face above the water. While in this position the thought first came to him that he would strike for freedom; and after many weary days he succeeded in crossing Mason and Dixon's Line.

In Pennsylvania there had been a law passed that gave freedom to any slave who desired it, if brought into the state by the owner. The most notable case that came under this law was that which brought freedom to Jane Johnson and her two children, and which brought national fame to Passmore Williamson, a young Philadelphia lawyer.

Jane Johnson and her two little boys, aged seven and ten years, were the property of a prominent gentleman of Washington, who was appointed in 1855 to a government commission in Central America. While en route to New York, where he was to take a steamer, he stopped in Philadelphia. Mr. Williamson, hearing that a slaveholder with his slaves was on board the boat at the wharf in the Delaware, proceeded with a few companions to the boat, and informed the black woman that she and her children were entitled to their freedom, if they desired it. Before the

woman had time to answer, her owner informed Mr. Williamson that "Jane did not wish to be free, that he would give her her freedom at some future time, and that she had children in the South from whom she would refuse to be separated." But Williamson addressed himself directly to the woman, and told her that if she desired her freedom she could have it that moment by rising and following him, and this she did.

Williamson was soon afterward thrown into prison, charged with "forcible abduction" and contempt of court for refusing to disclose the hiding-place of the rescued slave-woman. His imprisonment, covering several months, attracted widespread attention. Hosts of friends visited his cell, and he received letters of sympathy from all parts of the North.

The owner of Jane Johnson immediately began legal proceedings to get her back, declaring that she had been forcibly taken from him against her own will. But Jane set all doubts at rest by swearing in open court that no one forced her in the least, that she left the boat of her own free will, and that she would rather die than go back into slavery.

A novel means of escaping from slavery is illustrated in the example of Henry Brown. Brown was an unhappy piece of property, and, after contemplating long upon how he might escape from bondage to a land of liberty, he decided on the plan of having himself boxed up and sent by express. He accordingly made a strong box of wood three feet long by two feet wide and three feet eight inches high. In this box, lined with baize and securely nailed up by his best friend, the negro was stowed, his supplies consisting of a few biscuits and a bladder of water. The box was sent from Richmond, Virginia, to the Vigilance Committee at

Philadelphia. It was marked, "this side up with care;" but this did not avail with the different expressmen, and part of the time it was upside down and the occupant rested on his head.

"Your case of goods is shipped, and will arrive to-morrow morning," was the contents of a telegram received by a member of the Vigilance Committee on the day of the shipping of Brown. To avert suspicion the committee secured the services of a prominent merchant of the city to receive the goods from the express office. The box was soon landed in a private room of the committee, and the door safely bolted. The members of the committee were much agitated. They could hardly believe that the colored man would be alive after spending twenty-six hours in such a condition. Great, therefore, was their astonishment, when one of them rapped gently on the box and said, "All right," and was instantly answered by a faint voice from within, "All right, sir!"

In a few moments, with saw and hatchet, the lid was removed, and Brown emerged as one rising from the dead. From this time forth he was called Henry "Box" Brown. After shaking hands with his deliverers he informed them that he had promised himself when leaving Richmond that his arrival hymn, if he lived, should be the fortieth Psalm. His small audience grew solemnly silent, and he sang slowly and touchingly, in the hollow, musical voice peculiar to his race, the Psalm beginning, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me and heard my cry."

In almost every issue of the southern newspapers during the period just preceding the Civil War, advertisements of runaway slaves appeared. The following, from a paper dated October, 1857, is a fair sample:<sup>1</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> See Still, *Underground Railroad*, p. 101.

\$2000 *Reward*. — Ran away from the subscriber on Saturday night, the twenty-fourth inst., fourteen head of negroes, viz: [here follows the name and description of each].

I will give \$1,000, if taken in the county, \$1500 if taken out of the county and in the State, and \$2000 if taken out of the State; in either case to be lodged in the ——— jail, so that I can get them again. SAMUEL P——.

P. S. Since writing the above, I have discovered that my negro woman, Sarah Jane, twenty-five years old, stout built and chestnut color, has also run off. S.P.

We close this chapter by relating one more escape by means of the Underground Railroad — one that appears more like a romance than an occurrence in real life. William Craft and his wife, Ellen, were slaves on a Georgia plantation. They longed for liberty; but the distance to free soil was great, and the obstacles to freedom seemed insurmountable. William was of a chestnut color, while his wife was so fair that she could pass for a white woman.

At length these two seized on a bold plan for effecting their escape. Ellen was to dress in man's attire and travel as a young planter with William as the servant. A fashionable suit of clothes was soon procured, and the woman's hair was trimmed in the style worn by the southern gentlemen. But there were many precautions necessary. The young planter's face was muffled up as if he were suffering with neuralgia. In fact, it was decided that the young man must seem very much indisposed and journeying northward for medical treatment. To obviate the necessity of registering at hotels the right arm was placed in a sling; large green spectacles were worn to hide the feminine eyes. To avoid making acquaintances he was to be very hard of hearing, and refer all questions to the servant.

They both played their parts most skilfully. Ellen, when approached by anyone, assumed an air of bold superi-

ority, and referred all questions to the servant, who was exceedingly active and attentive to his young master. They stopped at first-class hotels in Charleston and in Richmond without creating suspicion; but a serious obstacle confronted them in Baltimore. When William applied at the ticket-office for tickets to Philadelphia, the agent informed him that it was a rule of the office to require bonds for all negroes applying for tickets to go North, and none but gentlemen of well-known responsibility could obtain them.

The servant assumed a very innocent air and replied that he knew nothing about that, his master was hastening to Philadelphia for medical treatment, and his health was so frail that it was feared he would not hold out till he reached that city. The agent, at last convinced of the urgency of the case, threw out the tickets, and a few hours later the fugitives reached the City of Brotherly Love. After remaining here for some time it was thought prudent to seek a home farther from the bounds of slavery, and they went to Boston, where, the fame of their marvellous escape having preceded them, they received a royal welcome. Here they lived, with no attempt at concealment, for two years — until the Fugitive Slave Law was passed — when it was learned that two slave hunters were prowling about the city in search of them.

William and Ellen Craft had made many friends in Boston, among whom were Theodore Parker, the famous preacher, and William Lloyd Garrison, editor of the *Liberator*. Their friends vowed that on no pretext should they be dragged back into bondage, that they would defend the fugitives at all hazards. When, however, it was found that warrants had been issued for the arrest of the Crafts, when it was seen that their freedom could be maintained in Boston



only by the shedding of blood, an easier method was devised: a purse was raised for them, and they were sent rejoicing on their way to England. The British public was familiar with the romantic story of their escape, and they were received in London with great favor by all classes, including the nobility. All fears of reënslavement were now removed, and William and Ellen Craft lived happily in London for many years, never ceasing as long as they lived to be the objects of curious attention from the public.

The constant aid rendered by northern people to the runaway slaves irritated the people of the South, and gave a local coloring to the growing strife between the two great sections, which found its culmination in the National Legislature. This contention could only increase until the cause was removed, and this could be done only by a final appeal to the arbitrament of the sword. While the judgment of posterity is and must ever be that slavery is wrong and at variance with the spirit of Christianity and the onward march of civilization, it is unjust to blame the people of the South for the existence of slavery on their soil. The peculiar institution had been inherited from our grandfathers' days, and our grandfathers had miscalculated when they believed that it would ultimately die and disappear of its own accord. "Least of all could the North or England cast a stone at the South, for each had a hand in the establishing of negro slavery."<sup>1</sup>

The South is to be congratulated on the results of the Civil War. Since the removal of that blighting institution, which weighed like a nightmare on southern prosperity, no section of our country has brighter prospects than the sunny South. The writer has talked with many ex-slaveholders on this subject, and, while some are not reconciled

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, Vol. I, p. 379.

to the "way in which it was done," they all agree that the South is far more prosperous since slavery has been removed, and under no consideration would they have their slaves back were it in their power. The Civil War was a surgical operation, — severe indeed, but necessary — and by it the normal health of the nation was restored. Since that war — since the downfall of slavery — the North and the South have come to feel a common brotherhood as never before; and so may it ever be; may there be one grand harmony increasing with the years!

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA BILL

AN act of Congress passed in 1854 and known in history as the Kansas-Nebraska Bill has been pronounced the most momentous piece of legislation in the United States before the Civil War. It came as a shock upon the country in time of unwonted stillness. For more than ten years, beginning with the Texas question and ending with the Compromise of 1850, there had been a succession of thunderbolts from the political sky, all bearing on the one disturbing element, slavery. The people had grown weary of the despised subject and they longed for rest. With the acceptance, in 1852, of the Compromise as a finality by both political parties, it seemed at last that (barring the local disturbance occasioned by the Fugitive Slave Law) the longed-for haven was at hand. But in the midst of the calm there broke forth a political storm more fierce than any before known to that generation. It came in the form of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill and its author was Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois.

### PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 1852

The Whig party in 1852 was in a demoralized condition, owing, principally, to the unpopular Omnibus Bill, of which that party was the father. The herculean efforts of the leaders to bring about harmony proved fruitless. Before the Whig convention, which met in Baltimore in June, were three candidates, all well known to the American public.

First, President Fillmore, the choice of the entire South. A northern man, it is true, was Fillmore; but he had won the southern heart by signing the Fugitive Slave Law, and now he enjoyed the support of that entire section. Second, Winfield Scott, the choice of the northern wing of the party, led by William H. Seward. Scott was a Virginian by birth, but he was now known to be, not a slave propagandist, but a sympathizer with the free-soil sentiment of the North. The third candidate was Daniel Webster. The following of Webster was a personal following and was much smaller than that of either of the others. He was not seriously considered by either of the great wings of the party, and the real contest lay between Scott and Fillmore.

The southern delegates insisted on embodying in the platform a final acceptance of the Fugitive Slave Law. To this the northern delegates demurred, but finally yielded, with a kind of tacit understanding that they would be allowed to name the candidate. Scott was therefore nominated, but not until the fifty-third ballot had been cast, so reluctantly did the South accept him. This choice, however, did not bring harmony to the party. The South was not satisfied with Scott; because, first, he refused to express himself on the Fugitive Slave Law, and second, he was too intimate with Seward, whom every slaveholder hated. A written protest, signed by Alexander H. Stephens, Robert Toombs, and other leading southern Whigs, utterly repudiated Scott, and declared that the signers of it would not support him. In this disorganized condition the Whigs went before the country asking the suffrages of the people, in 1852. Their only consolation was that the Democrats were in little better condition.

The Democrats, having also met in Baltimore, the great convention city of this period, had several leading candidates

to choose from. There was Cass, the stalwart and dignified leader; but Cass was weakened by his defeat of four years before at the hands of General Taylor; and besides, he was growing old, and some called him the old fogey. Next, Buchanan, a leader among the politicians, but not widely popular with the masses outside his own state. The third candidate was a young man, brilliant, dashing, and of extraordinary talents — Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois. Douglas was but thirty-eight years old, the youngest man ever seriously proposed for President of the United States, until the rise of Bryan in 1896. But Douglas was too young and too dashing to please the older members, and this constituted his weakness before the convention. A fourth candidate was ex-Governor Marcy of New York; but, not having made his peace with his own state, in which he had so lately been a faction leader, how could he expect the support of the nation?

Thus each prominent candidate disclosed a weakness that prevented his nomination. The convention balloted forty times without success, when a "dark horse" began to loom into view. It was a young man from New Hampshire, named Franklin Pierce. Pierce was a man of some note. He had been in both Houses of Congress, had declined an invitation to a place in Polk's cabinet, and had enlisted as a volunteer in the Mexican War, where the President's favor soon made him a brigadier general, though he knew little of military affairs. His father, a private soldier of the Revolution, had risen to the governorship of New Hampshire. These advantages, together with his fine appearance, his winning manners, and his jovial nature, made Franklin Pierce a general favorite; but in no sense could he be ranked among the leading statesmen of his time.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, an old friend and college classmate



of Pierce, wrote his biography, which received a wide circulation, and the Democrats were soon united as one man for their candidate — a thing that could not be said of the Whigs. As the campaign progressed it was plain that Scott was losing ground. Pierce was triumphantly elected, Scott carrying but four states, two in the North and two in the South.

This was the last national campaign of the Whigs. The party was doomed and was tottering to its fall, and ere another quadrennial election came round the story of its life was history.

The Democratic party seemed now to have a powerful hold upon the country. None could deny that the future seemed to insure for it a long lease of power. Already the leading spirits of the party were casting longing glances toward the next presidential election, and never before did the glittering prize seem more sure to the one who should be so fortunate as to win the nomination.

#### STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

Among the aspirants to the great office was the young and brilliant leader from Illinois, and to him must be attributed the one extraordinary act of Congress by which the Pierce administration will be remembered in American history. Douglas was a native of Vermont; he had migrated to the prairie state as a penniless youth, had first worked at a trade, then read law, and entered the field of politics. So rapid was his rise that ere he had reached his fortieth year he was an acknowledged leader in the United States Senate. As a popular leader representing the great West there was none to dispute his sway.

But in those days it was necessary for an aspirant to the presidency to bring forth fruits to win the favor of the South,

and this Douglas had never done. While searching about for some bold issue by which he could make himself champion, Douglas decided upon the all-important measure known as the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.

Douglas was the chairman of the Committee on Territories. There was a vast tract of wilderness called Nebraska, lying north and west of Missouri, and comprising almost half a million square miles. In January, 1854, Douglas brought into the Senate a report of the committee providing for the division of Nebraska into two territories to be known as Kansas and Nebraska. If that had been all it would have attracted little attention; but there was one little clause in the report which caused all the trouble, and that was that each territory should decide for itself whether slavery should exist within its bounds. This may seem innocent enough at first sight; but it ran counter to the Missouri Compromise of 1820. That compromise had forbidden slavery forever in the Louisiana Purchase north of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes, and both of these territories lay north of that line.

For a whole generation the Missouri Compromise had been looked upon as a solemn compact as binding as a treaty between the North and the South. It is true the Congress of 1820 had no power to bind its successors; but the Missouri Compromise was more than an act of Congress. It was a solemn agreement of the people, and that agreement carried with it a moral force that no subsequent Congress had a moral right to disturb. Thousands of people at the North, who were alarmed at the growing power of slavery, had yet this one consolation: It cannot come beyond the forbidden line of thirty-six-thirty. But now suddenly, unexpectedly, unasked by North or South, Douglas sprung upon the country this Kansas-Nebraska Bill,

annulling the Missouri Compromise, and enabling the slaveholder to carry his human property in to the territories of the Northwest.

Douglas had consulted with two persons before taking the important step — President Pierce and his Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis.<sup>1</sup> These three had a long conference on January 22, and they agreed that the Missouri Compromise should be repealed. On the next day Douglas brought the bill before the Senate. But Douglas did not have smooth sailing. There were powerful leaders in his own party whom he could not control. Before the close of January these had published a vigorous protest in the form of an "Appeal of the Independent Democrats in Congress to the People of the United States." This was written by Salmon P. Chase and signed by the leading Free-soil Democrats in Congress; and it marked the beginning of the great revulsion of political parties brought about in the following years by the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

The news that such an act was about to be thrust upon the country fell like a bomb in every section of the North. The people were first dumfounded at the audacity of Congress in thrusting such a measure upon them without making it an issue in any campaign. When they recovered from their first astonishment they made themselves heard. The newspapers, with few exceptions, denounced the proposed act with great vehemence; various state legislatures raised their voices of protest. Excited multitudes assembled in the cities and towns throughout the North to protest against the measure, and the moral indignation that prevailed had never been equaled since the battle of Lexington at the outbreak of the Revolution.<sup>2</sup>

Let us take a view of the Senate. One man there attracts

<sup>1</sup> Schouler, Vol. V, p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> Rhodes, Vol. I, p. 463.

the attention of the country. He is rather short of stature and compactly built, has a smooth-shaven face, raven-black hair, keen, penetrating eyes, and deep, melodious voice. It is Stephen A. Douglas, the "Little Giant from the West." Douglas was the acknowledged leader of the dominant party in Congress, and as a parliamentary debater he had no equal in the nation. His extraordinary powers lay, not in his extensive learning, for he was not highly educated, but rather in his subtle power of reasoning, his ability to becloud and belittle the best argument of an opponent, to throw the main points in the background, and to bring forth some unimportant matter, and make his hearers believe that it was the important thing after all. There was not a man in the Senate who could evade his cunning nor withstand him in debate.

But the opposition must not be underrated. There were Salmon P. Chase and Benjamin Wade of Ohio, Sumner and Edward Everett of Massachusetts, Seward of New York, Sam Houston of Texas, the old hero of San Jacinto, and others of lesser note. These made a strong coalition against the proposed measure, and they disputed the ground inch by inch; but the skill and genius of Douglas triumphed over them all. The bill passed the Senate on the fourth of March at five o'clock in the morning, after Douglas had spoken all night.

This last speech of the Illinois senator on the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was the greatest he ever made. A short time before midnight he appeared before the crowded chamber with the conscious strength of a gladiator entering the arena. His eyes were lit with the fire of genius. Knowing that the country had already condemned him, and believing this to be his great opportunity to vindicate himself, he now put forth his best efforts; and the skill and power

with which he advocated his measure won the admiration even of his opponents.

When the bill passed, the boom of cannon from the navy-yard announced the victory to the sleeping city. As Chase walked down the Capitol steps in the gray dawn of that morning, he exclaimed to his friend Sumner, "They celebrate a present victory, but the echoes they awake will never rest until slavery itself shall die." Late in May the famous act passed the House, was signed by the President, and became the law of the land.

#### RECEPTION OF THE BILL IN THE NORTH

Stephen A. Douglas was a lover of his country, and, at heart, no doubt an honest man. Had he foreseen what a storm of indignation his favorite measure would create in the free states, there is reason to believe that he never would have brought it forth. In bidding for southern favor he had sacrificed his popularity in his own section. Next to Douglas, the one who reaped the greatest harvest of dishonor was Franklin Pierce. He was the one man who could have prevented the enactment of the law, but, like most of the politicians of the time, he was unable to rise above an obsequious truckling to the Slave Power. The anger of the people was fierce and implacable. Douglas was burned in effigy in many places, and was bitterly denounced throughout the free states. Attempting to make a speech in his own city, Chicago, he was hooted off the stage. He was called the Esau who sold his New England birthright, the betrayer of his country, Judas Iscariot, and the like; and a society of women in Ohio reached the acme of contempt by sending him thirty pieces of silver.

The leaders of the party in power had thus enacted into law a measure the importance of which can scarcely be



overestimated; but in so doing they had made one fatal blunder — they had not consulted the people! The people are the masters in this country, say what they will of political bosses. The people may be disregarded and their rights trampled under foot for a time, but they will eventually rise and assert their power, and woe to the public man who dares disregard them! However popular, however powerful, a political leader may be, if he set himself against and defy the masses of the citizens who have raised him to power, he will soon find himself crushed by the ponderous weight of public opinion.

Douglas had failed to count the cost. Dashing, brilliant leader that he was, only forty-one years old, he had won the American heart as few had ever done before; but now he oversteps the limit of public forbearance, and he finds himself dashed to the ground like a broken toy, and his presidential prospects forever blasted.

#### RESULTS OF THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA BILL

There is no doubt that the Civil War was hastened by this famous legislation of 1854. Some even claim that there would have been no war but for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; this is perhaps claiming too much. But the bill had a wonderful effect in breaking up old party lines at the North. Most of the new states of the Northwest had been solidly Democratic from the time of their admission into the Union, but now they abandoned their first love, and some have never since returned to it. The same is true of several states in the East. The Kansas-Nebraska Law gave a final blow to the expiring Whig party, and opened the way for the formation of a new party. The founding of the Republican party within the same year must be named as an indirect result of the passage of this law.

The Kansas-Nebraska Bill caused the border warfare in Kansas; it rendered the Fugitive Slave Law a dead letter throughout the North; it brought forth that other son of Illinois, greater than the "Little Giant," into the arena of national politics.<sup>1</sup> It brought about the great political revolution of 1860; it marked the beginning of the end of the more than a half century of Democratic rule in the United States.

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, Vol. I, p. 490.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATES

THE great political discussion known by the above heading was, with reference to the high character of the contestants and the importance of the subjects discussed, the most significant of its kind in American history. The contest was certainly a battle of the giants, and the impression it made on the country was deep and lasting.

#### A VIEW OF THE TWO MEN

The principals in this great duel, Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln, had much in common. Both had risen from poverty and obscurity — one, born among the New England hills,<sup>1</sup> had sought his fortune in the great West while still a boy, had entered the political arena in his early manhood, and had risen until he now held the most conspicuous position in the highest legislative body in the United States; the other, born in a slave state among the lowliest of the lowly, had in early childhood crossed the border, and was reared among the untutored backwoodsmen, where he picked up a meager education as best he could, had entered public life, and, after varying fortunes for a quarter of a century was now the acknowledged leader of his party in his state. Both had made the broad prairie of the West their permanent home. They had served together in the Illinois legislature many years before, and since then had been personal friends. They had attended the same horse-

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XXI.

aces, eaten at the same table, and, it is said, had loved the same maiden. They were both honest, fearless, able, and keenly ambitious to rise in public life. Both were sanguine, jovial, and companionable; and each possessed the rare quality of winning a large circle of friends.

These two political gladiators now stood upon the same platform in the summer and autumn of 1858, and addressed the same audience in seven different Illinois towns, on the most momentous question that ever disturbed the harmony of the Republic; two years later they were to stand at the head of their respective parties and ask the suffrages of their countrymen for the highest office in their power to bestow.

But the points of difference between Lincoln and Douglas are more marked than their points of resemblance. Douglas was low in stature, compactly built, and his voice was that of the trained orator; Lincoln was tall and awkward in appearance, his voice was rather high-pitched. Douglas was bold and defiant in style, fluent in speech, severe in denunciation; Lincoln possessed the power of putting his thoughts in a terse, simple, epigrammatic form, so logical that even his great opponent with all his powers of casuistry could not escape their force. Douglas had reached the zenith of his power, and for four years past had held his lofty position amid adverse political winds only by his marvelous courage and fortitude; Lincoln was just emerging from comparative obscurity, and was soon to surpass his antagonist and become the leading American of his time.

Both men were among the greatest public characters that our free institutions have produced. The time, moreover, of their coming together was portentous. It was a time when the forces of slavery and freedom had grappled in a deadly struggle for supremacy in the Government. Considering the standing of the rivals about to engage in

this debate, the time of their meeting, and the universal interest in the subject to be discussed, there is no wonder that the eyes of the whole country were turned for a season toward the prairie state.

#### PRELIMINARIES

Stephen A. Douglas had been for several years the foremost leader of his party, and his party had full control of the Government. His popularity had suffered severe reverses throughout the North, it is true, on account of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill; but he had largely regained his former prestige by the brave stand he took later on the affairs in Kansas.

The trouble in Kansas arose from an attempt to put into operation the provisions of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in that territory. The South was exceedingly anxious to gain another slave state so as to restore its power in the United States Senate, which had been broken by the admission of California as a free state. The slaveholders, therefore, determined to make Kansas their prize, and the proslavery party from Missouri poured into the Territory in large numbers with the intent of carrying the elections and making Kansas a slave state. But the northern people were on the alert. Bands of emigrants came from all sections of the North, with an equal determination to make Kansas a free state. The two parties came together, and there was fierce conflict resulting in much bloodshed.

This border warfare, as it was called, continued for several years, and was the most annoying of all public questions at the time when Mr. Buchanan became President in 1857. President Buchanan was very anxious to settle the matter without offending either side; but his sympathies were obviously with the South. He prevailed on Mr. Robert J. Walker, of Mississippi, who had been a member of President



Polk's cabinet, to accept the governorship of Kansas, and pledged him the support of the administration in securing justice for that much disturbed territory.

Mr. Walker was a slaveholder, and his sympathies were with the South; but he was an honest man, and his sincere desire was to deal justice to both sides. But scarcely had he reached Kansas when he found that the proslavery party was carrying things with a high hand. A proslavery legislature, elected by fraud,<sup>1</sup> met at Lecompton and framed the famous Lecompton Constitution, making Kansas a slave state without honestly submitting the matter to a vote of the people. The honest soul of Governor Walker revolted against such proceedings, and he openly opposed the work of the legislature.

President Buchanan had promised to sustain Walker; but from some cause, probably the influence of certain members of his cabinet, he now abandoned his friend, and decided to recommend the Lecompton Constitution to Congress in his annual message in December. Walker was mortified and chagrined at this action of the President, and, like his three unfortunate predecessors, he resigned the governorship and retired to private life.

But President Buchanan had an obstacle to encounter that was beyond his power to overcome. He had a greater man than Governor Walker to deal with, and that was Stephen A. Douglas. A few days before the opening of Congress, Douglas called on the President and protested against his recommending the Lecompton Constitution, without first submitting it to a vote of the people of Kansas. Buchanan warned Douglas not to interfere, nor to oppose the

<sup>1</sup> Oxford, Johnson County, returned 1628 votes. It was found to be a village of but six houses. The names had been copied from a Cincinnati directory. Many precincts showed similar false returns. See Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History*, Vol. II, p. 105.

administration, or he might soon find his political career at an end. But Douglas with great courage and with great power denounced the fraudulent Lecompton Constitution in the Senate; and the result was the defeat of the President, not in the Senate, but in the House.

Thus Douglas regained a large part of his lost popularity in the North, but in so doing he sacrificed much of his newly won laurels in the South, beside making a political enemy of President Buchanan.

The Republican newspapers praised him for his bold stand for justice and fair play in Kansas, while some of the Democratic papers abused him without mercy.

Douglas's second senatorial term was drawing to a close, and the election of the Illinois legislature in the autumn of 1858 must determine who should be his successor. Some of the leading Republican papers, including the *New York Tribune*, now advocated the reelection of Douglas on the ground that he would continue the fight with the administration and split the Democratic party.

Horace Greeley of New York and Senator Crittenden of Kentucky urged the Illinois Republicans not to oppose the election of the Democratic senator; but with this request they refused to comply. Many of the Republicans of Illinois had been old line Whigs; Douglas had been their chief opponent for a generation, and now they found it impossible to overcome their old prejudices and assist in sending him back to the Senate, and hence they produced their own candidate in the person of Abraham Lincoln.

#### THE CHALLENGE

The Republican state convention met at Springfield, Illinois, in June, 1858, and nominated Abraham Lincoln as their first and only choice for United States senator.

Lincoln was then called for, and he rose to speak amid the greatest enthusiasm. The speech that he now made was one of the most logical ever delivered on the all-important subject of slavery, and in it he made the statement that afterward gave him national fame.

"A house divided against itself," he said, "cannot stand. I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved, I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other." This expression was far in advance of public opinion even in the newly founded Republican party. Before delivering this speech Lincoln had read it to the party managers, and they all save one disapproved it, and urged that the above expression be omitted. Lincoln's answer was: "If it is decreed that I should go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked with the truth — let me die in the advocacy of what is just and right. . . . I would rather be defeated with this expression in the speech, than be victorious without it."<sup>1</sup>

In reference to the attempt of the eastern Republicans to have Douglas sent back to the Senate, Lincoln said in the same speech:

They remind us that he is a great man and that the largest of us are very small ones. Let this be granted. . . . How can he oppose the advance of slavery? He does not care anything about it. His avowed mission is impressing the public heart to care nothing about it. . . . Our cause, then, must be intrusted to and conducted by its own undoubted friends — those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work — who *do care* for the result.<sup>2</sup> . . . I wish not to misrepresent Judge Douglas's position, question his motives, or do aught that can be personally offensive to him.

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, Vol. II, p. 315.

<sup>2</sup> Douglas had said in the Senate that he did not care if slavery in the territories was voted down or voted up.

Whenever, if ever, he and we can come together on principle, so that our cause may have assistance from his great ability, I hope to have interposed no adventitious obstacle. But clearly, he is not with us — he does not pretend to be — he does not promise ever to be.

Lincoln was not ignorant of the greatness of the task he had undertaken. He well knew that he was scarcely known beyond the bounds of his own state, while his opponent enjoyed a national fame not surpassed by that of any other man. He knew that the masses almost idolized the Little Giant, as Douglas was called, but that his own following was for the most part yet to be won. It is a remarkable fact that Lincoln at that time attracted public attention because of his connection with the world-famous Douglas, and that at this day Douglas is remembered more for his connection with Lincoln than for any other event of his life.

Lincoln was anxious to arrange a series of joint debates in order that the two might speak from the same platform. This he thought would be the best way to bring the issue squarely before the people; he therefore decided to challenge Douglas to such a discussion. This was a bold move on the part of Lincoln, for his opponent was the acknowledged champion public speaker in the United States. He had measured swords on the floor of the Senate with Seward, Chase, Corwin, Sumner, and many others, and had surpassed them all. Lincoln's proposal therefore proved not only that he had unbounded confidence in the justice of his cause, but also in his ability to present it.

On July 24 he addressed a brief note to the Democratic candidate asking if it would be agreeable to him to arrange a series of joint debates before the same audiences. Douglas answered on the same day, stating that his dates had already

been fixed for almost the entire campaign; but in order to accommodate his rival he was willing to arrange for one joint meeting in each congressional district, except the two in which they had both already spoken. It was agreed therefore that they speak from the same platform in seven different towns on dates beginning the twenty-first of August and ending the fifteenth of October.<sup>1</sup>

The announcement of this arrangement created much interest, not only in Illinois, but throughout the country. Lincoln's party friends were at first alarmed. They knew of Douglas's marvelous power as an orator, his wonderful hold on the masses, and his unbroken successes from his youth up. But Lincoln had a clear advantage over his antagonist in several particulars. He represented a new and enthusiastic political party. He stood for freedom as against human bondage. He represented a new and more enlightened civilization, that was taking hold of the popular heart with irresistible power, while Douglas was obliged to defend the worn-out theories and ideals of a by-gone age. Furthermore, Lincoln's hands were unbound; he had nothing to lose. Douglas, on the other hand, was an aspirant to the presidency; and, while his speeches were addressed to the people of Illinois, he dared not forget that the whole country was hearing every word and watching every movement. The opposition which Lincoln had encountered from the leaders of his own party in the East was more than balanced by the hostility of the Buchanan administration to Douglas. The two champions were, as before stated, personal friends. Lincoln had paid high tribute to the ability and success of his opponent; Douglas, in his opening speech of the campaign

<sup>1</sup> The times and places of the seven debates are as follows: Ottawa, August 21; Freeport, August 27; Jonesboro, September 15; Charleston, September 18; Galesburg, October 7; Quincy, October 13; Alton, October 15.



at Chicago, had referred to Lincoln as a "kind, genial, and honorable gentleman." He afterward paid tribute to Lincoln's ability by stating that in all his discussions at Washington he had never met an opponent who had given him so much trouble as Lincoln. "I have been in Congress sixteen years," said Douglas, "and there is not a man in the Senate I would not rather encounter in debate."<sup>1</sup>

It was agreed that the first speaker occupy an hour, the second an hour and a half, after which the first would close with half an hour, thus covering three hours in all. At their first meeting, in Ottawa, Douglas had the opening and closing, as Lincoln had at Freeport, and so on alternately to the close. The excitement of the people rose to fever heat. The meetings were held in the open air, as no hall was large enough to hold the crowds that gathered.

#### EXTRACTS

We shall not attempt to give even an outline of the speeches in this great contest. A few extracts will show the general trend of the argument. There was but one important subject treated by the contestants, and that was the slavery question, or rather the particular phase of it arising from the Kansas-Nebraska Bill and the Dred Scott Decision — the advance of slavery into the territories. Douglas rang many changes on Lincoln's Springfield utterance that "A house divided against itself cannot stand," and its application to slavery in the United States. This doctrine, he claimed, instead of allaying the strife between the North and the South, would foster and encourage it until a war of sections would result.

Lincoln disclaimed all intention of inviting a war of sections; but reiterated his belief that one side or the other

<sup>1</sup> *Lincoln-Douglas Debates*, p. 340.

would eventually become supreme throughout the country. "Is slavery wrong?" said Lincoln, "that is the real issue. That is the issue that shall continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between two principles — right and wrong — throughout the world. . . . The one is the common right of humanity and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says: 'You work and toil, and earn bread, and I'll eat it.'"

Lincoln appealed again and again to that clause in the Declaration of Independence, "All men are created equal."

"This," he insisted, "meant all men, and not simply all white men,— created equal," not in mental endowments nor in worldly station, but in their natural rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. "I agree with Judge Douglas," said he, "that the negro is not my equal in many respects. But in the right to eat the bread, without the leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal, and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man." His most eloquent apostrophe to the Declaration of Independence had been uttered early in August at Beardstown. The speech closed with the following words:

You may do anything with me you choose, if you will but heed these sacred principles. You may not only defeat me for the Senate, but you may take me and put me to death. While pretending no indifference to earthly honors, I do claim to be actuated in this contest by something higher than an anxiety for office. I charge you to drop every paltry and insignificant thought for any man's success. It is nothing; I am nothing; Judge Douglas is nothing. But do not destroy that immortal emblem of humanity — the Declaration of American Independence.

To Douglas's frequent assertion that the fathers who framed the Constitution were content to let slavery alone,

but that Lincoln only increased the agitation by taking the stand he did, the latter replied, "There is no way of putting an end to the slavery agitation amongst us but to put it back upon the basis where our fathers placed it, — no way but to keep it out of our territories — to restrict it forever to the old states where it now exists. Then the public mind *will* rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction."

Douglas lauded "Popular Sovereignty" as embodied in his Kansas-Nebraska Bill. Lincoln quaintly answered that the logical meaning of that was that "if one man chooses to enslave another, no third man has a right to object." The substance of Lincoln's argument from first to last was that slavery is wrong, and its spread should be arrested. He was not an abolitionist, nor did he propose to interfere with the institution in any state where it existed; but he held that, since slavery was an evil in itself and was constantly menacing the peace of the country, it should be prohibited by Congress from all the territories, and thus put in the way of ultimate extinction. Douglas, on the other hand, professed to be entirely indifferent on the subject of slavery. He did "not care if it was voted up or voted down." If the territories desired to have slavery, they had a right to it, and Congress had no right to interfere. This doctrine became popularly known as "Squatter Sovereignty."

#### THE FREEPORT DOCTRINE

Senator Douglas was a man of wonderful resources. His capacity to rise above political adversity was extraordinary. Many believed that his fathering the Kansas-Nebraska Bill would end his political life; but with remarkable exuberance he rose above popular clamor, and in a few years he had again become the favorite idol. But it remained for this

notable debate with Lincoln to deal the Little Giant a blow from which he could not recover.

At the first joint meeting, at Ottawa, Douglas propounded to Lincoln several important questions bearing on the subject under discussion. This was a fatal mistake on the part of Douglas, as he soon discovered. Lincoln evaded giving direct answers at the time, saying, however, that he would do so on condition that Douglas would answer an equal number of interrogatories propounded by him.

Six days later they met for their second discussion, at Freeport. Lincoln, on rising to speak, answered his opponent's question *seriatim*. He then read a series of questions that he had framed, and called upon Douglas to make answer before the audience as he had done. The second of these, as follows, was the fatal one: "Can the people of a United States territory, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits, prior to the formation of a state constitution?"

It is necessary to explain here that the clause in the Kansas-Nebraska Bill which dealt with this point was equivocal, and it received a very different interpretation north and south of Mason and Dixon's line. In the South it was interpreted to mean that, as the Constitution recognized the right of property in slaves, the Government was bound to protect it, as any other property, in all public lands, including the territories. The territory, therefore, had no voice in the matter until it became a state. It was like a child not yet of age, the National Government being the parent, and having full control until the territory reached its majority, that is, statehood.

In the North the clause was held to mean that a territory had the power, at any time, to exclude slavery from its

bounds by a vote of the people. With this explanation the depth of Lincoln's question will readily be seen.

Douglas was thus placed in the most trying position of his life. An avowed candidate for the presidency, it was absolutely necessary for him to retain or win the favor of both the great sections of the country; but now he is forced to stand before a public audience (and that audience included the whole United States) and give his views on the one great question on which the North and the South were at that moment at variance. But there was no escape. He had begun the catechising process; and to refuse to answer Lincoln's questions now would have been cowardly, and would have arrayed public feeling against him. It was generally supposed that he would answer the question in accordance with northern sentiment. The Republican leaders, who knew of Lincoln's intention to put this question to his opponent, greatly feared that Douglas would answer according to northern feeling, and thus win the senatorship. A number of them, it is said, sought Lincoln at his hotel late on the night before the Freeport meeting, invaded his sleeping-room, and urged him not to put that question to Douglas. But Lincoln persisted, and they cried out, "If you do, you can never be senator." "Gentlemen," replied Lincoln, "I am after larger game; if Douglas answers as you say he will he can never be President, and the battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this."

The day came, and Douglas, after Lincoln's opening speech, rose to make reply. His answer to the all-important question was, as was generally expected, in accordance with the northern view. He explained that the people of a territory could introduce or exclude slavery, as they pleased, for the reason that the institution could not exist anywhere for a day unless supported by local police regulations —



that if the people are opposed to the institution they could prevent its introduction by unfriendly legislation. The theory thus put forth was not only at variance with the doctrine held throughout the South, but it openly contradicted the Dred Scott Decision, which permitted the slaveholder to carry his human property into the territories without hindrance.

This opinion of Douglas soon became known as the "Freeport Doctrine." It was taken up and discussed by all the leading newspapers in the United States. Many of them scored the author without mercy. But the most scathing criticism he received was from Lincoln, who in his subsequent speeches showed with pitiless logic how inconsistent was this opinion with the Dred Scott Decision, which Douglas professed to accept as sound Democratic doctrine.

#### THE RESULT

The immediate result of the Lincoln-Douglas debates was a victory for Douglas. He was reëlected to the Senate by a narrow majority, though the Republicans had a majority of the popular vote. This apparent contradiction arose from the unfair apportionment of the legislative districts, and from the fact that of the twelve hold-over senators eight were Democrats.

But the immediate result of the senatorial election was of little importance compared with the vaster results that soon followed. In fact this great debate proved to be the turning-point in the political life of both the contestants. From this time forth their fortunes moved rapidly, but, like Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker, in opposite directions. The return of Douglas to the Senate seemed to give him the victor's palm, but, in the light of subsequent events, the world must render a different verdict. This was the last

victory of Douglas. His Freeport Doctrine was deeply offensive to the whole South and to some of the leading men of his party at the North. His Lecompton revolt was a venial offence compared with this.<sup>1</sup> He found himself wholly out of fellowship with a large portion of his party, and all hope of a reconciliation was at an end. Two years later, when the party met in national convention to nominate a candidate for the presidency, the naming of Douglas by the northern delegates caused a revolt from those of the South, who, naming their own candidate, thus rendered the party an easy prey to its great and newly formed antagonist.

The most important single result of this joint debate was what it did for Abraham Lincoln. The discussion at first attracted national attention only because of Douglas's connection with it — Douglas, the man without a peer in the United States Senate, the restless, ambitious soul who had stirred up such strife four years before in the national capital. But ere long the people saw that a greater than Douglas was upon the scene; they beheld in the political firmament a still brighter star rising from the prairied West! Lincoln's reputation from this time was national. His speeches, read from one end of the land to the other, were found to be the fullest, clearest, and most logical statement on the slavery question to be found anywhere. He was henceforth acknowledged to be the foremost man in his party, with the possible exception of Seward of New York; and two years later, at the national convention, when it was found that the great New Yorker could not be nominated, Lincoln became the logical candidate for the presidency. With his success at the polls, his subsequent success during the great crisis through which our country passed, every reader is familiar.

It remains to say a word about his defeated opponent.

<sup>1</sup> Nicolay and Hay, Vol. II, p. 163.

Douglas bore his defeat in 1860 most manfully; and the contribution he made toward preserving the Union in the great conflict that followed was neither trifling nor small. If there was one man in the country, in 1861, who could have compassed the destruction of the Government, that man was Stephen A. Douglas. The Republican party alone could not have won in the gigantic struggle, nor prevented the final dissolution of the Union. Nearly a million northern Democrats looked to Douglas as their political oracle. His creed was their creed, his loyalty, their loyalty. Douglas, knowing this, did not hesitate to cast his lot on the side of the Union. He called on President Lincoln soon after the inauguration, and proffered his services in any way in which he might be useful. The report of this interview, published throughout the North, had a powerful effect in determining the attitude of Douglas's followers. Lincoln was greatly pleased with Douglas's action, and it is believed would have appointed him to some high position of honor, had his life been spared; but in June of the same year Douglas was called on to pay the final debt of Nature, and he was gathered unto his fathers.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### RELATION OF THE STATES TO THE NATION

IN the United States every citizen has two patriotisms, two loyalties — one to the United States as a nation, the other to the state in which he resides. He lives under two governments, or rather two complementary parts of one great system, the national and the state, and is subject to two sets of laws, blended, however, into one whole. To us it is an easy matter to adjust our twofold patriotism between the nation and the state, because a century of experience has settled the question for us. We need only to fall in with the prevalent feeling of the masses, to join the great current of American thought, and there is little of personal effort left for us.

But a hundred years ago it was very different. Then it was that there were constant quarrels in Congress on the relation of the states to the Union, that any state would threaten to secede for some real or imagined wrong, that the wisest statesmen often solemnly predicted that the Union would not stand half a century. No wonder if the common citizen found it difficult to arrange in his own mind this twofold allegiance, while now there is scarcely more conscious effort required than for a child to love both its parents without partiality.

The union of our nation with the states is a wonderful combination. Nothing like it ever before existed in ancient or modern times. There are still some who belittle the states and look upon the national government as everything; there

are others, a smaller number perhaps, who still pay homage to that old mouldering corpse — State Sovereignty. Both are equally in error. It is true, if we had to choose between the two, we would give our first allegiance to the nation, and not to the state. This is the normal condition of every unbiased American citizen. At the same time let it not be forgotten that one of the greatest bulwarks of our liberty is found in state rights, as will be shown later.

Our national Government and the separate state governments have been blended in such a way as to preserve the integrity of each, so that national laws and state laws, however much they intermingle, do not conflict, but work in one grand harmony. Our states are to the nation, as Mr. Bryce puts it, like smaller wheels revolving within the circumference of a greater wheel; each is supreme within its own sphere, neither encroaching upon the domain of the other.

#### ORIGIN OF THE STATES AND OF THE UNION

In order to get a better view of this union of states and nation and their mutual relations, let us glance briefly at the origin of both. In one sense the states (the original thirteen only) are older than the nation. They had their origin as colonies, under British rule, and the oldest had existed nearly two centuries before the Union was formed. The colonies were closely related — same race for the most part, same language, aims, history, literature; but their only political bond was through England. They were wholly separate and had nothing to do with each other in matters of government. Indeed, their governments were quite unlike; some were royal colonies, some chartered, some proprietary. No union whatever existed during this period, except that of four New England colonies for a brief period.



But in another sense the Union is older than the states. This was shown with much force by President Lincoln in his message to Congress in 1861, when arguing against the right of secession. The colonies before the Revolution were not states, but simply parts of the British Empire. It was not until 1776 that the newly formed Union, acting through the Continental Congress, declared the colonies absolved from their British allegiance, and erected them into states. Before this they were dependent colonies, like children not yet of age; now they became self-governing states only by the action of the Union: hence the Union is older than the states.

But priority of birth has little to do with the subject before us. Since the right of secession has been decided in the negative by the outcome of the Civil War, this is a matter of speculation rather than of practical politics. The kind of union to be formed was the great question that troubled our forefathers; for it was plain to be seen that the Union hastily formed at the beginning of the Revolution could not be permanent. Accordingly, in 1781, near the close of the war, the new-formed states adopted a Constitution previously framed by Congress, and known as "The Articles of Confederation." This constitution was very defective;<sup>1</sup> the most serious defect was, perhaps, that the Federal Government could act only on a state and not upon the individual, and thus Congress was rendered powerless to enforce any national law, nor had it power to put into operation its treaties with foreign nations. It could only recommend to the states as states, and if they chose to disregard its acts, as many of them did, there was no power to force them. A government that cannot enforce its own laws is no government at all.

The Articles of the Confederation had been in force but

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. V.

few years when the state of the country became most deplorable. The states quarreled with one another, laid tax on one another's merchandise, and habitually disregarded the laws of Congress. Yet the experience during this period was wholesome, for it taught the people, as nothing else could, that a strong central government was absolutely necessary. And a better government came. The Convention of 1787 at Philadelphia framed a Constitution which, with the amendments subsequently adopted, is still the supreme law of the land. With these introductory statements we proceed to our subject, the relation of the Union formed by the Constitution to the states that compose that Union.

#### THE THREE KINDS OF GOVERNMENT

Governments may be divided for our present purpose into three kinds, the consolidated, the federal, and the confederate. The consolidated government may be compared to an organism, a living body, in which every part is essential to every other part. There is a central life-giving power, the heart, from which flows the life-blood to every member of the body, and no part can live without a constant supply from this fountain. So with a unified, consolidated government: there is a central, all-powerful authority from which proceeds the entire governing force of the nation. All subdivisions of territory are but agents to carry out the dictates of the central authority. All public officials down to the village mayor and the justice of the peace act under this same authority. Such governments are usually monarchies, but republican France must be numbered among them. Our own state governments are also of this class. The counties, townships, and city corporations are but agents of the state and created by it.

All county, city, and township officers, though elected by the people, hold their commissions by the authority of the state constitution and legislature.

The second of these three classes is the federal government. This may be likened to a large building with separate compartments, each with its own industry—mercantile, manufacturing, and the like—but all under the same roof and within the same walls. Such a government is composed of states, or cantons, each independent in its own sphere, but held together by the outer walls of the general government. The most conspicuous example now in existence is our own country.

The confederate government is like a cluster of houses near together joined by a league for mutual protection and benefit, but each still independent and at liberty to withdraw from the league as its pleasure.<sup>1</sup> A confederate government has never yet been successful. One of the most notable examples in history is our own country after the Revolution and before the adoption of our present Constitution. Switzerland was such a country before 1848.

Thus it will be seen that the character of our Government was changed by the Constitution. Its adoption wrought a political revolution. Before that it was a confederate government; since then a federal government. Some of the framers of the Constitution were in favor of abolishing the states, obliterating state lines, and forming one compact, consolidated government. Others, and a greater number, favored leaving all real power with the states, and making the General Government simply an agent to take charge of general matters, especially foreign affairs. The result was a compromise between the two.

<sup>1</sup> These figures I have enlarged upon, receiving the suggestion from Goldwin Smith.

The Constitution is the bond that unites the several states to the nation, *i.e.*, to the people of all the states. In the people taken collectively resides sovereignty; therefore the nation is sovereign, because composed of the whole people. The states are not sovereign, because some of the necessary prerogatives of sovereignty are denied them.

#### NATIONAL AND STATE LAWS

The people of the states, in thus surrendering some of their powers to the Federal Government, by no means surrendered all, but only those which affect the whole people or the people of more than one state; all others are reserved to the states or to the people.

Most of the powers of the General Government are those which affect the whole people. It has sole power to wage war, to coin money, and to make treaties with foreign nations. It regulates commerce with foreign nations and between the states, controls mail service, etc. These powers are the highest prerogatives of sovereignty, and no nation can be sovereign that does not possess them.

But withal the nation is far away from the daily life of the citizen as compared with his state. We deal with the United States when we elect a President, or a member of Congress, when we mail a letter, or come in contact with the custom-house. We are reminded of the General Government by the stamp on a cigar-box, and by the money we use; but in fact national law touches the common citizen in time of peace but slightly. Nearly all the ordinary laws under which we live are state laws. All our laws of marriage and divorce, of inheritance, of partnerships and corporations, laws against crime (with a few exceptions), all laws concerning our social and business relations, are state laws. Our public school systems, our civil and religious rights, protection of our

homes, depend chiefly on state authority. As President Garfield said, "The state government touches the citizen twenty times where the national government touches him once."

But the laws of the National Government, though fewer in number, are of a higher order than those of the state, and, like the nervous system in the human body, which extends to every point of the surface and centers in the brain, so our national system of laws extends over the entire country, penetrates to the remotest corners of the Union, and they act on every citizen without regard to his allegiance to his state. These two sets of laws, the federal and the state, form one vast dual system. They often intermingle, and overlap at many points, and, where they conflict, the state law must always give way. But in practice they seldom come in conflict, and the principal reason is this: Every state constitution ratifies the federal Constitution and makes that instrument a part of itself, and the state officials, governor, legislators, judges, and county officers must take an oath to support and defend the national Constitution. They are, therefore, in a remoter sense, United State officers as well as state officers, and under equal obligations to support both. Thus we readily see how the two sets of laws work in harmony, since they are executed in part by the same officials. While it is true a state is not sovereign, it is supreme within its own sphere, even more so than the Federal Government.

#### NATIONAL AND STATE AUTHORITY

The governments of the nation and of the state differ in two important respects. 1. The powers of the nation are delegated powers, and did not exist before the Union was formed in 1789; while the powers of the state are inherent



and date back to colonial times. 2. The Federal Government has no power beyond that which is given it in the Constitution, that which affects the whole people; while a state has absolute power over its own people and its own territory, except, of course, that which is delegated to the nation. It is true a state is forbidden a few things by the Federal Constitution, such as granting titles of nobility, passing *ex post facto* laws, adopting other than a republican form of government, denying the right to vote on account of race, color, or sex and the like; but aside from these and a few others a state has absolute control over its own affairs. If Pennsylvania, *e.g.*, chose to obliterate county and township lines, to abolish city charters and the public school system, to disfranchise a man on any ground whatever except race or color, or, indeed, to become a veritable tyrant, there is no power in the Federal Government to prevent it. The nation could not interfere without violating its own Constitution. The state is absolute master of its own affairs. When we say that the states are subordinate to the nation, we do not mean that they can be commanded by it, but simply that they are less national in their functions. State rights are as sacred and inviolable as national rights; and the nation has no more authority to overthrow the state governments or to encroach upon state rights, beyond that granted by the Constitution, than the states have to overthrow *its* authority. In either case it would be revolution.

A state, therefore, is independent of the Federal Government in its own domain, nor does it derive its powers from the latter; but the moment it gets beyond its own boundary its authority ceases, and it comes in contact with federal authority. In fact, a state has no power whatever beyond its own bounds. It cannot even pursue and bring back an

escaped criminal from another state without national authority; it cannot deny to citizens from another state the privileges and immunities extended to its own citizens; it cannot lay the smallest tax, or tariff of any kind upon the imports from another state. While the states, as we have noticed, enjoy domestic independence, they have no foreign relations whatever, not even with one another. Indeed, in practice, aside from demanding and giving up fugitives from justice, the states have little to do with each other. They are almost as far apart in their political relations as they were in colonial times, the chief difference being that now their governments are far more uniform and their common allegiance has been transferred from the British Crown to a Union of their own making.

The relation of the nation to the states has been compared to that of a parent to the child; but the comparison is ill-chosen. The parent has an original, inherent right to train and command the child in every honorable way; but the nation has no such power over the states, and what power it has is not inherent and not original. A better comparison would be with the relation between a teacher and pupil. A teacher has real authority over the pupil; she directs his studies, teaches him good manners, and has power to command him in many ways; but her authority is limited, is delegated, and exists only by virtue of a contract for a specified time. Outside of school hours she has no power over the child, and even during school hours her authority is not absolute. She has no right to eat the child's dinner, nor to rob him of anything that is his. So with the General Government: it has real authority over the whole people, but that authority is limited, is delegated, and exists only by virtue of a written bond; but, unlike that of the teacher, it has no time limit; it is perpetual. As the

teacher has no power over the pupil outside of school hours, so the nation has no right to command the citizen in matters that concern the state only. As the teacher has not absolute power over the pupil even in the schoolroom, so the nation has not absolute power over any law-abiding citizen, except it be for war service. The President of the United States has no more right to command you or me in time of peace than we have to command him, nor could the unanimous vote of both Houses of Congress confer such power upon him.

We live under a vast dual system, the first of its kind in human history, though since 1848 the Swiss government is very similar to our own, and there are also many points of resemblance in some other countries. Our system is not an arbitrary arrangement; it is a natural growth. The power of the states comes down to us from colonial days, the state constitutions being but modifications of the royal charters, while the powers of the Federal Government, though conferred at a later date, were nevertheless necessary. When the Constitution was framed it was impossible and undesirable to obliterate state lines and to create a consolidated government, while a mere confederation of states, which they already had, was equally undesirable and could not be permanent. Our federal system, therefore, was not only natural, but necessary.

#### ADVANTAGES OF THE FEDERAL SYSTEM

A question here is pertinent: What are the advantages of the federal system? and another: Is it the best system for our American Government? The advantages are many, a few of which we notice. Our Government is exceedingly complex in its working. This is an advantage of the greatest value. The simpler some things are, the better, but not so

with the government of a great nation. It ought to be so complex that no one man or small body of men can grasp, or comprehend, or manage it. This should be the work of the multitude, and so it is in this country.

The following is from Daniel Webster:

Nothing is more deceptive or more dangerous than the pretence of a desire to simplify government. The simplest governments are despotisms; the next simplest, limited monarchies. Every free government is necessarily complicated. If we abolish the distinction of branches and have but one branch; if we abolish jury trials and leave all to the judge; if we then ordain that the legislator shall be himself that judge; if we place the executive power in the same hands, we may readily simplify government. We may easily bring it to the simplest of all possible forms, a pure despotism. But a separation of departments, so far as practicable, and the preservation of clear lines between them, is the fundamental idea in the creation of all our constitutions.

This complexity of government, this distribution of power among all the people, is the chief corner-stone of our federal system. It not only secures the personal attention and interest of the common citizen in the making and enforcing of laws, thus educating him in political wisdom, but it also provides better local laws. The people of any neighborhood know better what local laws they need, how to frame and execute them, than does the far-away power of a central government. And also where the people have a hand in the making of their own laws and carrying on their own government, patriotism is everywhere fostered: for where a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also.

In America the humblest citizen knows something about public affairs, and, should such an emergency arise, there is scarcely a county in any state but could furnish men capable of being governor of the state, and scarcely a state in the Union that could not furnish a score of men capable of

filling the presidential office with an ability equal to that of the average President.

If our National Government should be overthrown, the self-governing states would preserve the general equilibrium of power and prevent universal anarchy. They would probably move steadily and serenely on until a new Union could be formed. If Congress were to disband, the President to resign, and our capital to fall into the hands of ruffians and anarchists, the people would be greatly agitated, of course, but the Government as such would not be annihilated, nor perhaps greatly disturbed. Why? Because our system is such that each separate part takes care of itself. If there is serious political disturbance in one or more states, the General Government is not threatened, and for the same reason. We have compared a federal government to a great building with separate compartments, each with its own industry. Such is our Government; and if one branch of industry becomes unsettled or ruined, the rest need not be seriously disturbed. Or if the outer walls be demolished, the various compartments may be preserved until the walls are rebuilt. How impossible this would be in a consolidated government, a living organism in which every part is dependent for its life and existence on the heart, the central, life-giving fountain.

Another advantage of the federal system is that the distribution of power among the states simplifies the work of Congress, and enables that body to confine itself to national affairs. Our forty-eight states require but little more national legislation than did the original thirteen. An English editor wholly misunderstood the situation when, commenting on the admission into the Union of four new states together (1890), he said that it remained to be seen whether the Government could bear such a strain. Indeed, Con-



gress was greatly relieved with their admission into the Union.<sup>1</sup> While in their territorial state Congress had to govern them; but on their admission into the Union, they became of age and self-governing, and Congress has no more to do with them now than with Ohio or New York. Our system is such that we can expand and add new states almost indefinitely without endangering the Federal Government, or scarcely increasing its burdens.

Now, the second question: Is the federal system the best for our American Government? My answer is, that it is not only the best, but the only system that could possibly be permanent. A confederation, a league of the states loosely bound together, from which any one has the right to withdraw, could not endure. Such a government would certainly fall apart from its own weight.

On the other hand, a unified, consolidated government would be equally impossible. The country is too vast, and the people too well educated and too independent and jealous of their liberties to submit to any central, all-pervading authority, or to permit their local affairs to be managed by other hands than their own.

#### STATE RIGHTS

As before stated, state rights constitute one of our great bulwarks of liberty as a nation. We know that the tendency of human government is toward the monarchical. This is not usually a natural or gradual tendency. It goes by sudden bounds, and is caused by the vast difference in the qualities of leadership in men, and by man's universal thirst for power. It is true, not because the people desire it, but because they are led or driven by some commanding genius. The most conspicuous examples in history are

<sup>1</sup> Macy, *Our Government*, p. 234.

those of Cæsar, who practically transformed the Roman Republic into a monarchy, and of Napoleon, who, with his transcendent powers of leadership, seized in his fatal grasp the new-born Republic of France, and became its absolute monarch within a few years after the blood-bought liberties of the people had been secured. And even to-day the Republic of France is so solidified that a second Napoleon, should one arise, might not find it difficult to seize the reigns of government and merge it into a monarchy and despotism.

But such a transformation would be impossible in the United States, and one of the greatest safeguards against it is found in state rights. Be it remembered that only a part of the vast power of the people has been delegated to the General Government. The states are the residuaries of power. Suppose one of our leaders in national politics to be a Napoleon in ability and in selfish ambition. Even suppose him to be President of the United States (though it would be far more difficult for such a man to reach that position than for an ordinary statesman), and to conspire with Congress and to secure their support in an attempt to overthrow the Republic and set up a monarchy with himself at its head. What would be the result? He would come into contact with forty-eight powerful state governments, — some of them more powerful than the minor European monarchies, — and upon this rock he would be dashed to pieces. It would require a greater man than Cæsar or Napoleon to accomplish such an end, and a man less wise than either would be too wise to undertake so hopeless a task. Let me repeat, the states are the residuaries of power in America, and state rights is the chief corner-stone of our fabric of free government. Let no true American belittle State Rights. It is true that before the Civil War, for years,

the term was identified with State Sovereignty, and in common parlance it referred to but one supposed right of the states — the right of secession. The term was abused and misused until it almost became an offence to the honest, patriotic citizen; but that time is past, the bone of contention is removed, and the states have again resumed their normal position in the great structure of the National Government. Every true-hearted American who studies this intricate problem, the relation of the states and the nation, will plainly see that the hand of Providence has been over it all, and while he will rejoice in our grand and glorious Union, he will take scarcely less pride in state rights, the great palladium of our liberty.

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